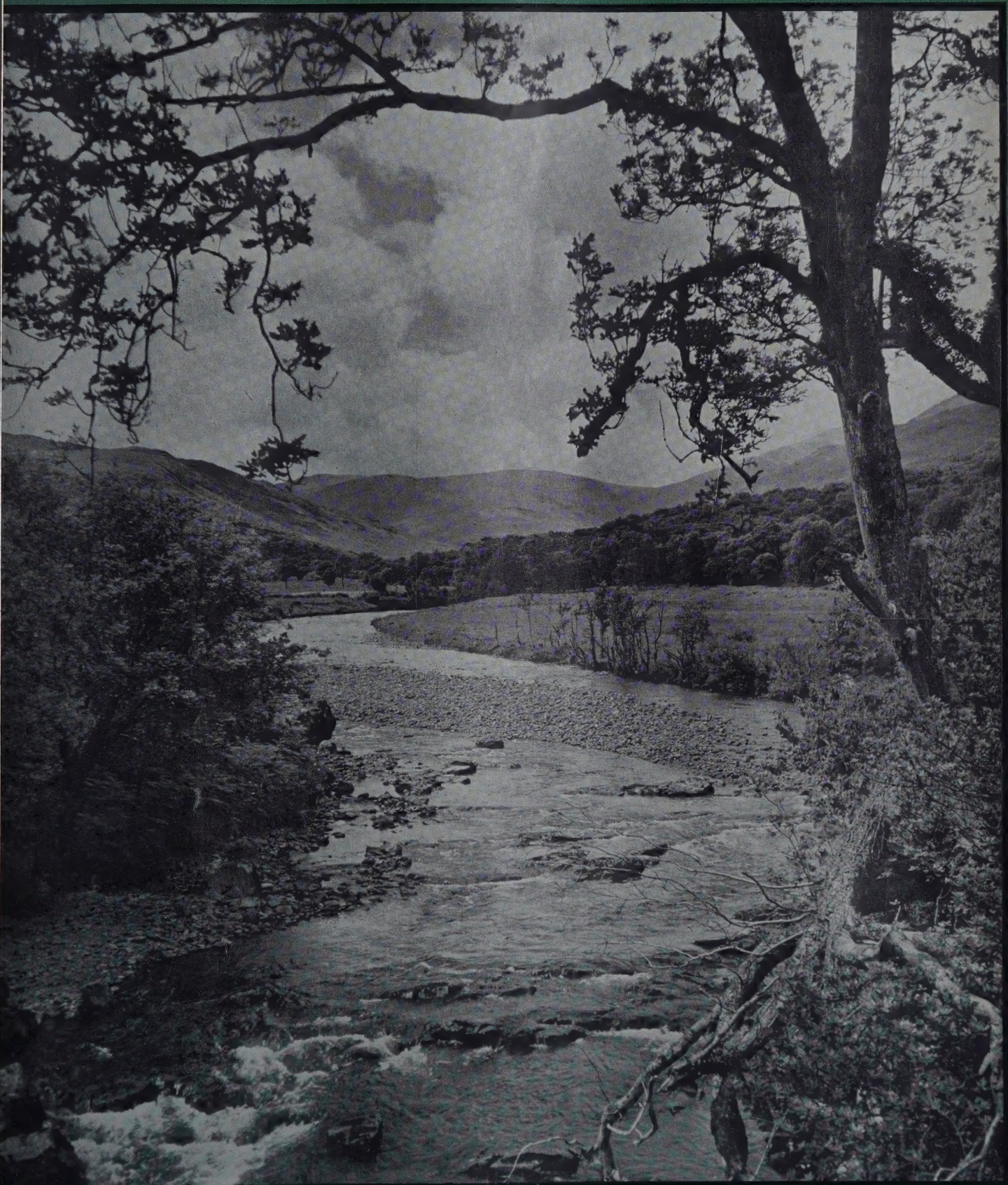


GOOD FOX-HUNTING PROSPECTS

COUNTRY LIFE

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COUNTRY LIFE

Vol. CXXII No. 3172

OCTOBER 31, 1957



Yevonde

MISS SHEILA WILLCOX

Miss Sheila Willcox was a member of the winning British team in the European Horse Trials held recently at Copenhagen and also won the individual championship

COUNTRY LIFE

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REGENT'S PARK SCENERY

"A SORT of glory, that will be more felt by remote posterity than the victories of Trafalgar and Waterloo," thought Crabbe Robinson, would be given to London by the architectural scenery promoted by the Regent's Government, of which the Terraces ringing his Park alone survive. Ten years ago Mr. Attlee's Government accepted the two main conclusions of the committee it had appointed under Lord Gorell to consider all aspects of their future: that the Nash Terraces are of national interest and importance and should be preserved as far as practicable, and that their long-term use should be residential. During the year and a half that the admirably thorough report took to prepare, however, some two-thirds (about 200) of the houses concerned were given first-aid repairs for use as government offices, an occupation expected to last for five years, and subsequently most of the remainder have been similarly reconditioned for private occupation and residence. The result has been that the committee's actual recommendations for the Terraces' preservation and use, although accepted by the Government in principle, have been shelved, the internal rebuilding and re-modelling have been postponed and the structural defects at the root of the buildings' decay have been allowed to continue, until the cost of repairs, estimated in 1947 at between £4 and £6 million, has trebled. Now, twelve undoubtedly representative spokesmen for the nation's arts, anticipating an announcement by the Crown Estate Commissioners the nature of which has been and easily can be guessed, have recalled the specific undertakings given by the Government ten years ago after most careful weighing of all the evidence for and against preserving the Terraces.

The evidence was certainly discouraging on the structural condition and probable life of most of the houses. They were meanly built behind their skin of painted stucco, designed for domestic conditions that have gone for ever, and infested with dry rot, and the passage of time has served largely to rule out, in the long view, any but the more costly alternative measures for reconditioning reviewed in the Gorell Report. It is likely that little short of complete rebuilding behind the façades, themselves in need of considerable reconstruction and horizontal subdivision, will give the Terraces another 50 years of useful life, and that at a high cost. Moreover, the Crown Estate Commissioners are bound by their constitution to an economic policy of "prudent trusteeship," which in effect rules out aesthetic and historical values, however great.

Is there, then, no alternative to the extreme measure, naturally advocated by some exponents of contemporary architecture, and

regretfully envisaged by others in the honest belief that it is common-sense, of replacing the whole of Nash's Terraces by modern buildings? We believe that there is, and one that offers the possibility of meeting in a large degree the claims of both protagonists: those who believe that contemporary design can and should be given the opportunity to use some of these superb sites to meet the needs of to-day and those who maintain that the elevation of some of the Nash Terraces, in themselves and in relationship to the park landscape, composes a work of picturesque and monumental art and a milestone of town planning that at all costs should be preserved.

In demanding preservation of all the Terraces, the spokesmen of the arts go further than several of the more discriminating witnesses quoted in the Gorell Report, notably the Ministry of Town and Country Planning, the R.I.B.A. and John Nash's biographer, who stated that if "new buildings were erected under careful control there need be no objection to a scheme of partial rebuilding," provided that three principal groups of Terraces were restored and preserved. These, which the report adopted

SAINT MARTIN'S SUMMER

SAINT MARTIN'S cloak is thickly scrolled
With dove-hued mists that nearly meet.

But in between lie threads of gold:
Days when the sunshine tells how sweet
The lingering rose, and skylarks mount,
Singing of summer. — You may count
The falling leaves, for scarcely, till
A robin hurriedly would pass,
They pile their gold upon the grass
So motionless the air and still.
Why in this perfect hour remember
The coming darkness and the snows?
A rainbow arches for November,
And faint the dread of winter grows,
When autumn, by Saint Martin's grace,
Can hold the spring in her embrace.

GERTRUDE PITT.

as the minimum alternative to complete preservation, included York-gate and Park-crescent on the south side, Chester- and Cumberland-terraces on the east, and Hanover-terrace and Sussex-place on the west. On architectural grounds the rest could be regarded as expendable, if thereby the preservation of the remainder were to be guaranteed. It should be made a condition of consenting to their subtraction from the entire unity that the financial yield thereby accruing should defray the cost of modern reconstruction behind the preserved façades of the remainder. It would be an empirical compromise: but, historically, the whole Regent's Park composition was that, and therein lies its essentially English character.

THE SECOND INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

GRIM and grievous as were the visual results of the historic Industrial Revolution, they were to some extent localised. Those of the second, electrical and atomic, are so menacing because they spread everywhere. The old landscape of organic nature, much of which coal-power spared, is now in a state of disintegration, primarily because almost all the new techniques are sectional, seeking to seal off parts of the land surface for their particular purposes (which nevertheless radiate all round), without the visual relationship to surroundings being considered. Having thus summarised, all too perceptively, the main cause of the beastliness going on everywhere, Miss Sylvia Crowe claimed truly, in her recent presidential address to the Institute of Landscape Architects, that that profession alone sets itself to mitigate, and where possible to readjust, the unbalance between nature and industry, art and science. It is not, she said, just a matter of planting a screen of trees here and there. Only a newly manipulated landscape can recreate a countryside bowled over by the impact of an atomic reactor's erection, or such a development as the Milford Haven project. In Switzerland, by contrast, landscape readjustments are, she

mentioned, begun ten years before the actual building of a new hydro-electric works, with its consequent change of water-level and scenery. Even lacking, as we rush blindly forward, such deliberation, landscape consultants would be capable of ensuring a degree of remedial planning here: however, few if any of these vast state-sponsored transformations deign even to commission a preparatory landscape survey. With so much to be done, more qualified practitioners must be trained before it is too late, by the setting up of full university courses—in the new universities if the old ones are too ossified in specialisation.

RABBIT DESTRUCTION

RABBITS are now reduced to the status of a worthless pest, the elimination of which can be the aim of everyone without any thought of commercial gain. This statement is not unfortunately true of Britain, but it is the claim of the Rabbit Destruction Council in New Zealand. There they have 202 Rabbit Boards covering in total an area of over 31 million acres. Backing the work of the Rabbit Destruction Council the New Zealand Parliament last year prohibited the export of rabbit skins or carcasses as well as their sale within the country. This was a big move because as recently as 1948 the export of skins and carcasses brought in £1 million. This income has been forgone and for a number of years past the Rabbit Boards have been spending about £1,100,000 a year. The amount that farmers pay in rabbit rates is supplemented by subsidy, £ for £. Much of the progress made in the high country could not have been achieved without the use of aeroplanes to lay poison. The Rabbit Destruction Council does not put much faith in the possibility of introducing myxomatosis, taking the view that all that the disease could be expected to do under favourable conditions is to reduce rabbits from a high density to a low one and the heavy rabbit population has already been removed in New Zealand. Is this assumption about myxomatosis correct? In the southern counties of England now rabbits are dying of myxomatosis, although there have not been many rabbits about for two years.

SPOILIATION UNCHECKED

NOT the least of Sir Winston Churchill's accomplishments as a statesman was his ability, even when wrestling with immense problems, to keep a vigilant eye on minor concerns. In those "telegrams" collated in the appendices of his war memoirs he is seen bringing his great authority sharply to the correction of slackness and indifference in relatively small matters of public concern. Few men in high places develop that ability. As for elective bodies, they seem to be inhibited by a fear that neglect of vital matters will be alleged against them if they are seen focusing their attention on problems of no great magnitude. This situation is, no doubt, at the root of the strong complaint made by the National Trust, in its annual report, that the "destruction and vulgarisation of the countryside . . . gathers increasing momentum." Mention is made of ill-sited or ill-designed cafés, petrol stations, advertisements, neon lights and concrete lamp standards and clutters of incongruous signposts. Graver offences, also, are listed, but of a kind more likely to engage the interest of those who have authority to act effectively. It is the lesser evils which, unchecked, multiply rapidly and which, in the aggregate, represent that widespread spoliation of the face of England which the report condemns. The vigour of the condemnation will be applauded by many citizens whose indignation would be expressed to much better effect if they could persuade themselves of their duty to take an active part in local government and to become members of those councils which have the power to prevent such spoliation and to repair it where it has occurred. "Future generations," say the Council of the Trust, "will hold the 20th century responsible" for what is now going on. That undoubtedly is true, and the responsibility rests to a large extent on those who saw it happening and failed to stop it.

A COUNTRYMAN'S NOTES

By IAN NIALL

IF I may make a light-hearted prediction, it is that before very long we shall have what might be called the "battery" cow. I can remember the consternation a relative of mine caused when he began to nursemaid his cows, giving them a wash before they were milked. It was hard enough to get people to milk in those days, and here was a man with a milking machine employing his former milking staff to wash the cows. There seemed to be no limit to his eccentricity. Had this particular molly-coddler of cows lived, I am sure he would have approved of music-while-you-milk, which has been tried with success. It seemed to me a long time ago that it wouldn't be beyond some farmers to conserve the energy of the cow, keep her from the meadow and get more milk as a result. A cow, after all, is best contented. She produces more. Milk from contented cows used to sell on that phrase alone. Bring the meadow to the cow and you are really taking a step forward! A cow going to the meadow uses energy and tramples down a certain amount of pasture. In the winter this doesn't happen because the cow is standing in. Keep the cow in all the year round and you achieve what the battery has achieved for egg production.

I MUST admit that this trend of thought received some stimulation the other day when I read a headline in Canada's *Free Press Weekly* which ran "Lazy Cows for Profit" and drew attention to the plan of a farmer in Ontario who has designed a "cowfeteria," allowing the milkers, which never get to a meadow, to feed as they will from a selection of silage or hay. A herd of 48 Holstein and Guernsey cows supplied with fodder from two silos, one 12 ft. high and 105 ft. long and the other an upright conventional silo, are claimed to have produced an average of 1,200 pounds of high-grade milk every day of the year, and an acre of hay per cow per year is the "input." As a result of the cows being kept off the pasture four crops of hay are harvested per field.

Cows eat about the same amount of feed-stuff wherever they are, and farms are now haunted by accountants and time-and-motion study experts. One doesn't need to be much of a prophet to predict that one day there just won't be a cow in the meadow. The conveyor belt will take the fresh hay right to the mouth of the cow, while in the background suitable music will play—*Greensleeves* would be my choice—and, perhaps, a cinema projector will throw meadow scenes upon strategically placed screens. The same sort of thing could be done with sheep. The only variation needed would be an undulating floor to give the impression that the lamb is really on the mountain. The countryside will then be wide open for all sorts of sport from motor-cycle rallies to uninhibited picnicking. If this sounds far-fetched, remember it was possible to see a horse in a field without walking ten miles, and that was less than 20 years ago.

CHESTNUTS, or conkers, as the schoolboy knows them, are just about over. It is a short season which really seems to get going before the nuts are hard and mahogany-coloured. Passing along an avenue of poplars that line a footpath leading to the school in the village, one has to be careful from the middle of September until about the middle of October because here and there in the line, at the whim of the long-dead owner of the walk, a horse chestnut tree was planted. Falling chestnuts never hurt anyone, but the things sent sailing into the air to bring them down are many and varied, from half bricks to the major portions of old bedsteads. Sometimes the throwing aloft of these things has a delayed action. The school bell clangs, the bits of bedframe hook



John Tarlton

"COME AND GET IT"

themselves in the branches and the coveted nuts remain undisturbed. An hour elapses and down comes the missile.

I used to think that chestnuts held a fascination only for schoolboys, but I am not so sure now, for not long ago I drew into a picnic spot near a line of chestnuts and was amused to discover that the owners of three other cars stopped there were rather self-consciously looking for nuts. One stooped and picked up a shell as I strolled past. As far as I could see he was without offspring. He turned the nut in his hand and looked at it once or twice, admiring its colour, then grinned rather self-consciously. I smiled as he slipped it into his pocket. Before I had gone 20 yards he was hurling a broken branch up into the chestnut tree in the hope of knocking some more nuts down.

THE season is over. The horse chestnuts have tumbled. So, it seems, have the walnuts that were on the trees at the cottage. I noticed this at the week-end when I gave a hand with locking up the fowls. One bird was perched so far aloft in the gloom that I wondered whether she might not be a pheasant or even a crow. It took a lot of beating about the tree and showering the upper branches with gravel to persuade that bird down. To get her into the hen-house I had to come from the slope most convenient for bombarding the tree and go round a wire-netting fence to shepherd her to bed. When I got there I was astonished to find that she had quickly flapped back into the walnut tree and worked her way up again. This happened a second time and might have happened a third had I not raced round and stopped her from getting into the branches once more. Immediately she put her head down and dived into the nettles, running along the netting at the bottom of the run. I was badly stung before I overtook her, and before I laid hand on her she squawked piteously. Young birds are a little hysterical, but I really did feel that this was more than I deserved. The walnut trees are rather low-branched and, since we

never get very much in the way of crop from them, it would be a good plan to prune them to a height that would foil the roosting tendencies of the chickens.

WE have a bit of juniper growing at the top of the garden. I used to think it was hard stuff to root and took a cutting of it just to see. It isn't, of course. Almost anyone can get it to take if he sets about it in the right way. We have had a juniper bush ever since. It seemed harmless enough until I went to look at some apples on the little tree recently. I am not so sure about juniper at all now. It supports or encourages a sort of bug, a slightly oval creature, green in colour, a wonderfully bright green with just a dash of red-brown about it. The apples on the little tree apparently had even more attraction for this peculiar bug than the juniper bush. I picked a few bugs off. They had hard cases and were about as jumpy as grasshoppers. I think they were boring into the apples, or sucking them as bugs do. In places some of the fruit that had been tapped was being nibbled at by wood-lice.

I looked up a book to check on the whole thing while the bugs were still sunning themselves, and I concluded that they were either juniper bugs, which are simply green in colour, or the bloody acanthosma. The juniper bug is given as a quarter of an inch in length and the bloody acanthosma as twice that size. My bugs are nearly half an inch long, but the book says that the bloody acanthosma shows its crimson part only when the wings are raised, so I am left bewildered. Perhaps, after all, there is some sort of apple bug which I haven't heard about. I have always been content to know these creatures at second hand. Once we got American blight, but we dealt with that. All the other pests have been taken care of before they materialised. If anyone wants a sample I should be happy to supply one the next time the sun comes out, provided, that is, they are still about then. The bugs vanish when the sun doesn't shine and we haven't been blessed with sun recently.

THE OLD SEABOARD OF SOMERSET

By R. D. REID

THE central plains of Somerset have been slowly drained and the coast kept back to its present line. There has been no dramatic exclusion of the sea, as in places on the East Coast, and much of the work was done so long ago that there are no records. The process, however, still continues, and consists now not so much in building sea walls as in lifting a great weight of water so that it may drain to the sea, and not spoil the land for agriculture. This process was much accelerated during the last war, when enormous quantities of water were required for a munition factory at Puriton, and so funds suddenly became available. The astute engineer to the Somerset Drainage Board seized the opportunity and erected a large pumping station at Gold Corner on Sedgemoor. Here four great diesel pumps take water from what was formerly the old Glastonbury Canal and raise it across a road into a wide new channel, cut for three miles to reach the Parrett estuary. Thus the purposes of war were served, and permanent good has been done by drying up and so increasing the fertility of wide tracts of land.

Ridges of high ground, more or less well defined, run across Somerset from east to west, and the spaces between, so wide that they must be considered rather as a series of plains than as valleys, lie very low. Across these plains the sea entered from the Bristol Channel for long distances, and farther inland there would be large stretches of fresh water. How far the salt penetrated we do not know. There was probably a gradual increase from the concentration of sodium chloride found in sea water to that normally to be expected inland.

The Mendips form the main ridge across the county from the high ground of Wiltshire to the Severn sea at Uphill. They even go beyond the modern coast, reappearing as the islands of Steep Holm and Flat Holm. To their north, across the plain now known as the North Marsh, the sea came inland for a long way, probably as far as the village with the significant name of Nailsea, later to become famous for its glass-works. This marsh is bounded on the other side by the northernmost of the Somerset ridges running from the Avon Gorge by Bristol to Clevedon. At its seaward end is perched the ancient parish church of that place, with its

memories of Tennyson and Hallam: "Break, break, break, On thy cold grey stones, O Sea."

Beyond this ridge to the north again, tucked away between the Severn estuary and the Avon, lies a forgotten corner, the Gordano Valley. It differs from the other plains of Somerset, however, in that it touches the sea at both ends, Clevedon and Portishead. The North Marsh, over the hill to the south, is much larger. Its chief river is now the sinuous Yeo, fairly heavily embanked, up which salt water still penetrates for an astonishing distance, almost to Congresbury. On its banks, not far from Yatton, was discovered a Roman villa settlement, with evidences that it had been used as a port. Here, also, the last serious incursion of the sea took place. In the porch of the little church of Kingston Seymour, near the villa, is a board recording the disaster, and a chap-book of 1607 is entitled *A true Report of Certaine Wonderful Overflowings of Waters now lately in Summersetshire*.

Such sea trading as took place with the North Marsh would be confined to the Yeo estuary. Barges came up to Congresbury in the last century. Collinson, the Somerset historian, writing in 1790, thought that the sea once went right up the "Vale of Ashton," near Bristol.

These exceptionally low lands along the



MAP OF THE COASTAL PLAINS OF SOMERSET, WHERE ONCE THE SEA FROM THE BRISTOL CHANNEL ENTERED FOR LONG DISTANCES. The sea has been kept back by drainage schemes carried out over the centuries

Bristol Channel have caused coastwise communications to be difficult. A long detour inland to Yatton is still necessary if one wishes to travel the few miles from Weston-super-Mare to Clevedon. For this reason one of the most delightful of light railways was constructed across the North Marsh. This was known as the Weston, Clevedon and Portishead Light Railway. As a child I spent holidays on the marsh and well remember my grandfather's complaining that he received no rent for a large advertisement board on his land, owing to the chronic state of bankruptcy of the company. It pointed to Ebdon Lane. To this station we sometimes drove to meet visitors. It consisted only of a time-table board and cattle grids. The train, as it crossed the lane, was stopped by much waving of umbrellas. I also remember being taken across several fields to see it go over "the salt water river," as we called the Yeo. To a small child this appeared to be a perilous performance, as the snorting engine, and rolling-stock reminiscent of 1840, trundled over a bridge of circular columns.

Sea defences for the North Marsh, mostly the embanking of the river, must have been completed by early mediæval days, as there are several churches dating back at least to the 14th century, notably at Wick St. Lawrence, Kingston Seymour and Puxton. The last named, with such a delightfully suggestive name—Pokeston or Pooks Town—stands at the heart of the moor, and its tower tips over into the morass so that it rivals Pisa itself. The interior has hardly been touched since Georgian times, and there are very complete parochial records of this remote community. The following items of charity, paid by people still living under the threat of the sea, are interesting: "Paid to William Hodges and his sonn that came with a pass undon by the Breach of the Sea 1/-." "Gave to two poore seamen which was cast away at the homeses [The Holms] 6d." All around the church one can soon get lost in a maze of rhines and ditches. The sense of isolation is enhanced by an unusual number of trees,



THE REMAINS OF A PORT ON THE RIVER YEO AT WICK ST. LAWRENCE. Last century barges went up the Yeo as far as Congresbury



VIEW ACROSS THE CENTRAL PLAIN OF SOMERSET FROM GLASTONBURY TOR

mostly elms and withies, effectively cutting off views of the distant hills.

No families of note have settled in this marsh, if we except the Kennes from the village of that name near Clevedon. There are no mansions and, with one or two exceptions, the farm-houses are mean and the cottages worse. This is in spite of the fact that the land is now some of the richest in Somerset. Its prosperity,

however, is probably recent and due to gradual drainage.

Brunel drove his main Bristol and Exeter Railway right across the flats of the North Marsh, and obtained one of the straightest runs in England, from Yatton to beyond Puxton station. Where he dug ballast for his bridges are now large lakes of bulrushes. By night thundering expresses produce a blaze of light

for a few seconds, followed by deathly silence and blackness as the marsh sleeps on.

South of the Mendips there is a slight subsidiary ridge on which stands the townlet of Wedmore. Thus between is formed the plain of the Axe. Boats came up the river almost as far as Cheddar, and salt water, we know, penetrated to the port of Rackley or Radecliffe, under the towering face of Crook Peak, now ten



THE CHURCH TOWER OF PUXTON, ON THE NORTH MARSH. This tower "tips over into the morass so that it rivals Pisa itself."
(Right) HYTHE, THE ANCIENT PORT OF CHEDDAR, ON A TRIBUTARY OF THE RIVER AXE



LOOKING TOWARDS THE MENDIPS FROM ABOVE THE LINE OF THE ANCIENT SHORE

miles inland from the sea. The sheds of this port have been destroyed only recently, and it is quite possible that the Romans and other exploiters of Mendip lead used it instead of going farther along the ridge to Uphill. Now in the parish of Compton Bishop, it lies under a bank of red marl at a point where river and road nearly converge. As early as 1179 the Pope granted the "Portus de Radeclive" to Reginald, Bishop of Bath. In the Wells manor rolls for 1478-79 there is an entry for the purchase of stone tiles to repair the houses of the manor: "Et in carriago eorundum a Radcliffe usque ad Wells per V plaustra pro plaustra 2/-...10/-." Rackley is really on the Cheddar Water (sometimes called the Yeo), which joins the main river, the Axe, a mile or so seaward from the port. We know that boats went up the tributary to Hythe, the port of Cheddar. This place now consists of a cottage or so.

The main River Axe continues on up the valley or plain, but swings away from its parallel tributary the Yeo to the high ground of the Wedmore ridge which it touches at Brinscombe. Here there are exciting stories of the remains of a three-masted ship.

South of the Wedmore ridge lies the plain of the Brue. The ridge, however, peters out beyond Blackford about ten miles short of the sea, and so the plains of the Axe and Brue merge into a large stretch of low-lying country with Burnham-on-Sea as its centre, and an island of Brent Knoll, anciently Mons Ranarum (the Mount of Frogs), 450 ft., as a prominent feature. At the landward end of the Brue plain rises the magic isle of Avalon, Glastonbury. Even if we discount most of the legends, there can be little doubt that there was sea communication with Ireland and Europe early in the first millennium A.D., and that sea water penetrated to the island. Glastonbury is really attached to England by a narrow neck of land to the east. In places, however, this sinks to a depth of only 50 ft. above sea level, and may at times have been covered by water. Then Avalon would be a real island, but it is evident that in prehistoric days attack was feared through this Achilles heel. Across the neck and over the modern road to West Pen-nard we can see the most impressive earthwork of Ponter's Ball.

North of Glastonbury a tributary of the Brue called the Whitelake river penetrates almost to Pilton, always on the mainland. The road from Glastonbury to Pilton obviously runs along an ancient shore and some distance out the Whitelake river follows a parallel course along what was once the bed of the lake. At Stean Bow it is joined by a short tributary flowing down from Pilton, through a deep ravine—the "pill," which gives the place its

name. On the bank stands a very fine parish church, in the yard of which we may see the only remaining boundary stone of the Glastonbury Twelve Hides—the original Saxon estate of the abbey.

This whole area is now known as Queen's Sedgemoor, but we find such interesting names as Red Lake, White Lake and Two Lake Meeting. The term pill is curiously persistent around this plain. We find Pilltown as a quite distinct hamlet along the "shore" road between Glastonbury and Pilton. Again on the north side towards Wells is Pillmoor, by a re-entrant stream. Is it too fantastic to suggest a nautical origin for the adjoining hamlet of Launcherley, birthplace of the famous brother bishops, Hugh of Lincoln and Jocelin of Wells? Some of these names have disappeared since the ordnance survey of 1801, and others, such as Tinbridge, have arrived.

If we return to the main Brue river, we find that it penetrates through a fairly narrow valley to Pylle, beyond which, again to the east, is the undoubted mainland. Across this relatively high ground runs the Fosse Way, which thus passes as far west as possible without entering the morass.

To the north of Avalon, the moor, formerly the sea, stretches for a mile or so to the foothills of the Mendips at Southway. Across it, on a causeway, runs the turnpike road made of the ruins of the abbey. To the south of Glastonbury the distance from the island to higher ground at Street is only a matter of a few hundred yards of a similar causeway. Here close to the Glastonbury end is the bridge Pons Perillous. This spot is full of romantic interest, for it is the traditional site of the mere into which King Arthur threw his sword Excalibur, and from which the mysterious hand rose to grasp it.

Just behind is the southern spur of the Isle of Avalon, Wearyall Hill, where grew the thorn which gave rise to the legend of St. Joseph of Arimathea. The old road, still existing, but not very much used, comes steeply down Wearyall Hill to Pons Perillous at its foot.

Yet another interest attaches to this place, since it was the point of embarkation from which barges set out to all the outlying estates of the mediæval abbey. The abbot himself went in a barge propelled by eight oarsmen, and there are interesting records of his passage, by means of a gap in the Wedmore ridge at Bleadney, into the plain of the Axe. So he could sail, or be rowed, right up to Nyland, near Cheddar, which was the limit of the abbey estates in this direction. The island of Nyland had been in the possession of the abbey since the 7th century. Much research remains to be done on these mediæval water courses. Perhaps in winter the track was across open sheets of water and in summer along the present river beds.

Going farther south we find that the gap between the Poldens and the Quantocks across the Horsey level is small, being about three miles wide. Through it the sea must have entered to the larger plain of King's Sedgemoor. The considerable inlet of the Parrett wanders to and fro on its way inland to Bridgwater. It touches high ground on the south at the Romano-British port of Combwich, and then swings across the plain to the north to the similar port of Dunball on the Poldens. "Cummage," as Combwich is pronounced, is an interesting little place five miles up the estuary. A port for 2,000 years, it ceased to function only during the last war. Along one side of the main street is the quay, and along the other a row of warehouses rapidly falling into decay. The carcasses of two considerable wooden ships are also breaking up. Eighteenth-century bay windows overlook the village green, and there is a general atmosphere of an abandoned but still delightful watering-place. The illusion is completed by a large and fantastic Gothic villa of mid-Victorian days, with railinged tower and overgrown garden.



COMBWICH, AN ABANDONED PORT ON THE ESTUARY OF THE RIVER PARRETT.
On the left are the old warehouses

A DEAL IN BULLOCKS

By J. WENTWORTH DAY

THE car ground to a teeth-shuddering stop in the forecourt of the house. A face, aquiline, sun-reddened as a pippin, peered out. Eyebrows, grizzled, formidable as barbed wire, shot out in a double-barrelled discharge, calculated to intimidate the innocent.

"Jes' going over to Runningfield to look at a bunch," the voice beneath the eyebrows announced. "Nice afternoon. Thought you might like to come."

Since the wise man realises that education, like the brook, goes on for ever, I opened the door and got in. We rattled off to view "the bunch."

"I might buy 'em and I might not," the voice went on. "They're a tidy bunch. Old Frank's, you know."

I nodded with the gravity of the half-educated.

Old Frank is eighty-five, looks like the Madras Cavalry, hunts, shoots, dances until the stars reel and asses for an uninhibited sixty.

"I've a friend who's just bought a house near Runningfield," I suggested casually.

"Just the idea!" said William enthusiastically. "We're going over to see him on a matter o' business. Old Frank can tell us where he lives." The solution had been found.

Twenty minutes later the car ground to a stop in Frank's yard, scattering pigeons, ducks and barking dogs.

Old Frank in khaki shorts, spotless shirt and careful bow tie appeared, neatly as an antelope, from among the runner beans. One got the impression that he had just changed after winning the Parents' Hundred Yards.

"Whisky? Sherry? Or something long with ice in it? Come in."

The room was long, cool, beamed and panelled, dappled with green shadows and shifting sunlight. Honey-coloured oak. Bristol glass, winking like rubies. John Leech over the fireplace. A marmalade cat on green and gold damask. Iced innocuous drinks in long glasses.

fly and any cattle with fat on 'em will run it all off with the fly a-chasing on 'em."

"That's true, William. That's true. Cattle just eat your money out of the bank this weather. Hardly worth selling 'em, is it?"

"Tain't worth buying 'em, Frank, old friend. When you've got 'em you've got to unload 'em. *Where* and *how*? Now, I know a man up in Nottingham wants a nice bunch o' bullocks. He must have some of those Trent-side medders where they never lack feed. But if I *did* buy a bunch there wouldn't be a penny profit in it. But there, I've done many a deal with him, so I suppose I'll have to look round for a nice bunch one o' these days. *After* we've had a spell of rain though. We need that to freshen the feed."

"We had a nice drop last night, William."

"Only a drop, Frank. *Only a drop*. Not enough to lay the dust, let alone fat a bullick."

"Depends on where they're feeding, William," Frank replied soberly. "If you've got



John Topham

"IF YOU GET BULLOCKS HALF-WAY UP A HILL ABOVE YOU, THEY LOOK AS BIG AS ELEPHANTS"

He owns a thousand acres or more, farms the lot and dwells in a gabled old house that was young when Elizabeth rode down to Tilbury. It sits between a garden full of summer scents and pigeon-dotted lawn and a sprawl of stables, coach houses, barns and stock-yards.

William, the power behind the eyebrows, is farmer-cum-cattle-dealer with half the county in the hollow of his hand. His father and grandfather were dealers before him, yeomen of sound repute, not mere catch-as-can pawnbrokers of farming ill-luck. They thought nothing of walking fifty miles with their drovers to take a herd of beasts to Smithfield.

You will observe that "buying a bunch" has nothing to do with choosing a spray of gardenias or sheaf of lilies for the charmer of one's choice. We were after bullocks.

"Course I'm not calling on old Frank on purpose," William confided with a sidelong glance. "We're just dropping in on the way home from somewhere else. Mustn't let him think I want to see his bunch 'specially."

Since William has been buying bulls, bullocks and heifers from old Frank for forty years, while his father bought them from Frank for a quarter century before that, the subterfuge seemed a little transparent. But that is the way of dealers. They foster eternally the pretence that the deal is purely an incidental aside, a pleasant interlude, in a day utterly preoccupied with other things.

"Nice of you to look in, William. Didn't expect to see you to-day."

"Didn't expect to see you either, Frank. James wants to see a friend who's bought an old house over at Deephedge. Thought you'd know where it is."

"Yes, yes. I know the place—top o' my medders on Brocksett Hill."

"Ah! Jesso. Good medders those. Always good feed in those deep bottoms. Why, that old pasture of yours must be a hundred years old, Frank."

"Dessay! Dessay! Member you bought a bunch o' heifers off me there last summer."

"Ah! So I did." William registered surprised but pleasant recollection. "Tidy bunch too. Market's different this summer, though. This hot spell's knocked the bottom out of prices; no trade at all."

"Isn't there now, William? Well, you see, I don't know values at all. Haven't been to market this last month. You never miss a market, old friend, so you have the advantage of me there."

The bright, blue, boyish eyes of eighty-five fell innocently upon William. I began to feel sorry for Frank.

"Well, then, that makes two of us," replied William genially. Babyish innocence flooded his rosy countenance. "I don't know the values either. The bottom's dropped right out, 'cos of this spell o' hot weather. Next we shall get the

bullocks in a nice deep bottom, with plenty of shade, where the grass never goes dry and a hillside above 'em where they can get sun and fresh air on the move, without the flies to bother 'em, they'll stay fat through the hottest summer. That's a rule of nature." He gazed solemnly at William. Diogenes never looked out of his tub with more detached philosophy.

"Jesso!" remarked William, rising to his feet. He had taken the hint. "Well, we must get along to Deephedge to find out where that friend of James is hiding himself. Like to come for a ride with us, Frank?"

"Might as well," assented Frank. "We've finished hay-cart. If I stop round here the Missus will find me a job. You can drive me round and I'll enjoy it! Getting too old to go to market nowadays and too old to drive, you know."

"Didn't stop you hopping round with one young woman after another till two o'clock t'other morning, at the Farmers' Ball, did it?" remarked William, climbing into the driver's seat.

We rattled out of the yard, through broad, bright fields of barley, swung down a dog-rose lane, where giant elms sailed like galleons against white clouds, and came to Deephedge. There the high upland falls to the luminous marshes in deep, steep, little valleys, like Devon combs. Each field, elm-bordered, is divided from the next by a great double hedgerow

where magpies shake their watchmen's rattles and resurgent rabbits flourish white scuts. Hence Deepledge. In the green tree-shadows of a field which rises from a lush green bottom to a hillside half as steep as the side of a house, there moved a dappled tide of black-and-white Friesian bullocks. Twenty or thirty of them.

"Tidy-looking bunch. Yourn?" remarked William casually. He had inspected them closely at six that morning while Frank was at breakfast.

"Yes—mine," said Frank with modest pride. He knew well that William knew just as well that the field had belonged to him for the past forty-five years and had never held any cattle other than his own. "Like to look at 'em while you're here?"

"Might as well, Frank. Can't stop long though. Got to see this friend of James's. Special business. We come over here a-purpose for that."

"Jesso, William. Mustn't waste your time. However you 'on't miss a minute or two. P'haps you can tell me what they're worth, seeing as I haven't been near the market for a month."

"Not a lot, Frank. Not a lot. Not with this hot weather and the market all sideways and more hot weather to come, they say, right away up to September, which means that folks will be all eating cold ham, hard-boiled eggs, ice-creams, lettuces and salads instead of sticking their teeth into a good beef-steak as they ought to. My heart! Wish I was in the horticulture business. Lettuces a bob a-piece! Like closing your jaws on money, ain't it? That's where *we* ought to be, Frank! Growing lettuces—not being eat out of house and home by a lot of hungry cattle that nobody wants—and with the root crops starving in the ground and hay costing solid gold. No future in *that*, is there, Frank?"

"Depends on where you keep your beasts, William," Frank replied with the innocence of old age.

He placed one foot on the bottom bar of a five-barred gate and vaulted over into the field like a klipspringer. William, a mere infant of fifty-five, followed with equal aerial grace. I managed to get over.

Frank was walking suddenly like a buck in spring. The bullocks went streaming up the hillside ahead of him. When they were three-quarters of the way up Frank diminished his sudden spurt of speed to the leisurely gait of a decorous country gentleman of eighty-five years of age.

"See that? Artful old boy!" William whispered. "If you get bullocks half-way up a hillside *above* you, they look as big as elephants. See that lot on the flat and they'd be no bigger than donkeys. *He* knows!" He strolled uphill towards the cattle.

"Nice lot, aren't they, William?"

"Nice-ish, Frank. Nice-ish. Some tidy good ones—but uneven. If I *was* looking for a bunch I should want to pick and choose. There's only so many that would suit. Why supposing—only *jes' supposing*—I was looking for a bunch, I wouldn't want more than eight out of that lot—all level, you know."

"You could get ten good level 'uns out of that lot, William."

"Maybe. My lorry won't hold more than eight."

"Won't it now, Frank? Well now, seeing I haven't been to market for a month and you were there last Friday, what do you reckon they *might* fetch?"

"Not a lot, Frank. All this heat. All that fly to come. All this long summer ahead. Cold ham and lettuces. Why, the beef trade's as bad as bad. What do *you* think, Frank?"

"What do I think, William? I think sixty pound a-piece!" He fired the words like a gun. A magpie shot out of the oak tree scandalised. William regarded it with interest.

"Do you know, Frank, I got scraped off me hoss by a low branch under that old oak out huntin' forty year ago. Went straight into your brook. Full o' water then—not all mud and flies like it is to-day."

"Ah! Jesso!" Frank replied. "That would be when old Squire Mashiter was Master. I recollect . . ."

They dived into straight-necked runs of

forty years gone as though such crudities as money had never been mentioned in terms so definite as to scare magpies out of oak-trees. I knew the form. The giants would now engage. Battle would be resumed by indirect flanking attacks, by feint and counterfeint, by suggestion and question—but never, until the bitter end, by a direct offer to buy or sell. Half an hour later I returned from a visit to the friend at the top of the lane.

"No, William! Fifty-five. That's my figure. They can stop here for another two months yet and they'll fat up all the time. They're worth sixty of anybody's money *now*."

"Can't be done, Frank. Why there wouldn't be a mite of profit in it for a poor little old farmer like me."

"You don't look so little to me, William. You never were poor and you'll mighty soon be rich if you try to beat down an old man like me, old enough to be your grand-dad and too old to go to market."

"Fifty-two pun ten, Frank. There's my hand on it." William's great fist, which takes a seventeen-hand hunter over the worst marsh ditches in England, shot out like a battering ram. Frank ignored it, with courtly politeness.

"Wild pheasants look like doing well this year and I do believe the poor old partridge is going to come back a bit," he remarked cheerfully. "Thank God we didn't have any heavy rains to drown 'em. But Lord! We had a down-pour last night. And blow! I thought it'd blow the roof off."

"It blew the fat off them bullocks of yours," remarked William unkindly.

"If it hadn't been for that downpour last night, which put a fresh flush o' grass into this medder bottom, you could have had them bullocks for fifty-two pun ten, *yesterday*," remarked Frank with a blue twinkle. "But that rain has put 'em up fifty bob a-piece. There'll be enough good grass here now to keep 'em happy for weeks."

"Tell you what I'll do, being as dad always bought from you and so have I—I'll give you *fifty-three*."

William shot out his hand again and blew out his chest with sheer magnanimity.

"Come back and have a cup o' tea," remarked Frank, ignoring both hand and offer. He pulled out a gold half-hunter, looked at it clinically and added: "I shall get a flea in my ear if I'm late for tea. Come and see my young bull. He weighs a ton, roars the roof off and broke out with half the stable door round his neck last Wednesday. There was three of us hanging on to him, going round the yard like dodgems. He's a likely young feller."

Tea lasted half an hour. Deep ploughing; the folly of using deadly crop sprays; the return of the rabbit; the dumping of cheap Norwegian hay and Russian wheat in bygone days and the possibility that high prices for potatoes this autumn would lead to the dumping of cheap French potatoes, filled the conversation. Not a word about bullocks.

Tea over, William picked up his hat, shook hands with his hostess, patted his host on the back, strode purposefully out of the house, stepped into his car, slammed the door and put his foot on the clutch. Suddenly he wound down the side-window and shot out his eyebrows and the words: "Fifty-three!"

"Fifty-five!" shot back Frank, hopping from one leg to another like a pea on a hot plate.

William touched the self-starter. The car shuddered into demoniac life. It jangled. It jittered. It chattered. Frank, mouthing inaudibilities, sprang forward, clipped white moustache bristling. He thrust his head in at the car window and snapped: "Fifty-five pounds. No less."

"Right," said William, shooting out a piston of a hand. "I'll give you fifty-five pounds apiece." Frank grasped the outstretched hand. For an instant old age was betrayed by the guile of merciless youth. "If you give me back a pound on every bullock for luck-money," William continued.

Frank dropped the hand and snapped back as though the Scarlet Pimpernel had snatched him from the guillotine:

"That's not a price. That's a trick."

"Tain't a trick," William replied blandly.

"You said you'd *take* fifty-five. I'm *giving* you fifty-five. You merely give me back a pound apiece luck-money."

"I'm damned if I do."

"You'll be left with your bullocks if you don't."

"No! Fifty-five, William. Fifty-five."

William opened the door of the car, put one foot on the ground (this well-known trick is seldom known to fail except with wily old birds of eighty-five) and said, hand outstretched again:

"Fifty-five pound apiece and eight pound luck-money back."

"No!" retorted Frank. "Tell you what I'll see you at Market to-morrow."

"To-morrow never comes," retorted William. "What's more, my dad always taught me never to carry a deal over. Put it off for a day and you lose money on it. Fifty-five pound apiece and eight pound back."

He withdrew his foot from the gravel, slammed the door, wound up the window, let in the clutch and re-started the din.

Frank wagged his handsome white head vigorously. "They're worth sixty," he yelled. You could have heard it above the boom of cannon at Mooltan. The car, grinding slowly across the gravel, stopped with a jerk. William wound down the window. Frank sprang at him as from a catapult.

William eyed him blandly. "I'll give you fifty-five. Tain't worth arguing about." Their hands met like lightning.

"I'll come for 'em next week," he added. "Sort 'em out myself and pay you on the dot."

"Leave 'em as long as you like," Frank replied. "Sort 'em to suit yourself, but you know my rule with everybody—I want the cheque three days before the cattle go. A cheque's only a bit o' paper till you get the money."

William nodded. They gripped again. He drove off.

"You took an hour and a half over that, not counting tea-time," I remarked accusingly.

"That took a minute or two more than I reckoned," he admitted.

"What'll you get for 'em?" I asked.

"Sixty-two pun ten apiece," he remarked complacently. "I've sold 'em already. I got 'em at the price I reckoned I would. But I *jes'* thought I might save a bob or two. It was worth tryin'—on anyone but Old Frank!"

We drove home, simple, contented countrymen, alone with the innocence of the dusk.

Four days later William's car slid up. The back springs seemed abnormally depressed.

"We're going over to pay Frank," he remarked innocently. "He likes hard cash—so he's getting it, hard! A couple of hundred-weight! Lift that!"

He pointed to a sack on the back seat. I could just shift it.

"All tanners, bobs and half-dollars—four hundred and forty quids' worth," he remarked succinctly. "That'll teach him to question *my* cheques."

We took tea with Frank. Cream and strawberry jam, plastered on bread without a hint of butter. A home-made plum cake which whispered of the bad old days of pre-1914 misrule. Money was not mentioned.

Finally—

"Will you take a post-dated cheque, Frank?"

"No damn fear! I like hard cash. Three days to clear a cheque—that's my rule."

William rose without a word. A minute later he re-entered slightly rosier than usual about the gills. He dumped the sack with a thud that shook the farm-house to its foundations.

"There you are—all hard cash."

Frank's face registered marble disbelief. He tugged at the sack. He opened it. Disbelief changed, chameleon-like, to amazement, glee, concern, defeat.

"How on earth am I to count this?" he gasped.

"You've got three days—what you wanted," William replied. "I'll come for them bullocks on Friday."

We did. They were worth the price. There the matter now rests. Frank, it is whispered, plans a come-back.

TOY DOG FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN

By S. M. LAMPSON

DURING the present year the spotlight of fame has twice fallen on an uncommon breed of dog. The Maltese. Ch. Snowdrop of Petop, owned by Mrs. L. M. D'Arcy, was the best toy dog at Cruft's in February, and Best Show at Manchester Championship Show a month later. Snowdrop is a tiny, active Maltese bitch with a fall of snow-white coat and bright, intelligent eyes that twinkle at the world from under a fringe of hair tied back with a red ribbon. Two such spectacular wins have aroused interest in the breed, and there is no question that these very beautiful little Maltese and their history deserve to be better known.

The cult of the toy dog is not new; it has existed for many years and in many countries. Melita, which is generally accepted as meaning Malta, undoubtedly provided the ladies of Greece and Rome with small playthings. Strabo, who was born about 64 B.C., wrote of *Canes Melitæi*, which "are not bigger than common ferrets or weasels; yet they are not small in understanding, nor unstable in their love." This and several other Classical references make it clear that it was no uncommon thing for the small dogs of Malta to travel to countries surrounding the Mediterranean, where they were much valued as pets.

When and how the Maltese dogs first came to this country we do not know, but it is perhaps romantic to guess that returning Crusaders may have brought them home as presents for their ladies. However they came, they were undoubtedly here when Dr. John Caius, physician to Queen Elizabeth I, made the first serious attempt to classify dogs into breeds or types. Under the heading, *Spaniell Gentle or Comforters*, he writes: "There is . . . another sorte of gentle dogges in our Englishe style but exempted from the order of the residue. The dogges of this kind doth Callimachus call Melitaers, of the Iseland Melita, in the Sea of Sicily (which at this day is named Malta, an iseland indeede famous and renowned)." Ten years later William Harrison dipped his pen in caustic to write: "The third sort of dog of the gentle kind is the spaniell gentle or comforter, or (as the common term is) the fisting hound, and these are called Melitei, of the Iland Malta from whence they were brought hither. These are little and prettie, proper and fine, and sought out far and neere to satisfie the nice delicacie of daintie dames, and wanton women's willes; instruments of follie to plaie with and dallie withall, in trifling away the treasure of time."

Except that they were "little and prettie, proper and fine," no detailed description of these little dogs seems to appear in any English writings of the time. However, a contemporary author, Mr. Edward Ash, quotes an unnamed German author who wrote about 1650 as saying that there were two varieties of Maltese dog—the short-haired and the flowing-haired—and that "the red and white are the most valued. They are the size of a wood weazel. That they may become small and remain so, they are shut up in baskets and fed in them . . . to make them hairy, their owners line their beds with fleeces for them to see constantly. In Paris they fetch 10 gold coins each. At Bologna they are sold at 40."

In the following years the connection between the dogs and Malta seems to have become less, and it is reasonably safe to say that they eventually became extinct on the island. In this country they seem to have become known as shock dogs, and were described by Thomas Bewick in his *History of Quadrupeds* (1791) as diminutive creatures "almost hid in the great quantity of its hair which covers it from head to foot."

By the last years of the 18th century we can turn from words to pictures for some knowledge of these little dogs, for we have Sir Joshua Reynolds's portraits of Nellie O'Brian and Miss Emilia Vansittart. Both these pictures include little dogs that are easily recognisable as Maltese.

The 19th century brought an increased interest in dog breeding and a greater facility for foreign travel. Many travellers returned

from Malta with what they were assured were the original dogs of the island; but only too often these either failed to survive the journey and the change of climate or, on being given better food and living conditions, grew into animals the size of sheepdogs.

It was undoubtedly the "fanciers" of this country who produced the Maltese as we know it to-day, making use of stock already in this country, occasionally importing from the Continent and possibly making use of small poodles. The first recorded Maltese to win prizes in the show-ring were Mr. R. Mandeville's Mick and Fido and Mr. Haxton's Patti, which stood first, second and third in the order named at a show held at the Agricultural Hall, Islington, in June, 1862. Of their breeding we know little except that Fido was by Tupper's Fido out of Lilly. Owing to the habit of duplicating names, the early pedigrees are almost untraceable. The Kennel Club Stud Book covering the years

the terriers that their gay, game and sporting temperaments suggest. Nevertheless, to refer to a Maltese terrier, as so many people do, is incorrect.

Although white is now the usual colour for a Maltese and one would be surprised to see a dog of any other colour in the show-ring, the English Standard permits them to be of any self-colour. At one time efforts were made to popularise the coloured specimens which Mrs. Pryce Hamilton imported from the south of France. However, one wonders whether these fawn, buff, blue, chocolate, black and parti-coloured dogs were, in fact, pure Maltese and not one of the smaller Asiatic breeds.

The English Standard for the Maltese varies slightly from that of the United States, where not only do they stipulate that the coat shall be pure white, but they also require their dogs to be smaller than ours, putting the ideal weight at 3-5 and certainly not over 7 lb.,



MALTESE CH. DARLING OF GISSING. The ancestors of these toy dogs were known in the ancient world, and may have been brought to North Europe by the Crusaders

1859-74 gives five Fidos, all owned by Mr. Mandeville, and of the twelve dogs whose breeding is mentioned eleven are by a Fido and the other claims a grandparent of that name.

For some unexplained reason Manilla seems to have produced typical Maltese around this period, for Mr. J. B. Walsh (Stonehenge) tells us that Psyche, the original of the illustration in his book *The Dog*, was the offspring of Cupid and Psyche, which were brought from Manilla by Captain Lukey, of the East India Company's Service. This pair was intended as a present for Queen Victoria. However, the state of their coats after nine months on board ship was such that they were not deemed presentable.

The craze for Pomeranians, which was followed by an even greater rage for Pekinese, probably goes a long way towards explaining why the Maltese never became one of the more popular of the toy breeds. That a white-coated dog with such a length of coat is not easy to keep clean and tidy is hardly an acceptable excuse, since Yorkshire terriers enjoyed a vogue for some years and, although their coat is not white in colour, the culture of it is a far more specialised business than the care of that of the Maltese. This lack of popularity seems a pity, for the supporters of the breed in this country have wisely insisted on treating them more like

whereas we approve of dogs weighing 4 to 9 lb. and stipulate that they shall not exceed 10 lb.

Even if the American Standard is more detailed than our own, ours gives a good word picture of the dog and is particularly notable for its opening words: "Characteristics—sweet tempered and very intelligent." The general appearance, it continues, should be that of a sharp terrier with a lively action; the coat should be long and silky and well groomed. The head should not be too narrow but of terrier shape, not too long and not apple-headed. The nose pure black. The dark brown eyes should not be set too far apart and should have black rims. The ears are to be long and well feathered and hang close to the side of the head with the hair mingling with the coat at the shoulders. The medium-lengthened neck should be set on well-sloped shoulders. The legs should be short, with the forelegs straight and the hind legs nicely angulated. The body is to be short and cobby and low to the ground, and the back straight; the tail, which is profusely feathered, should be well arched over the back. Most important of all, the coat should be of a good length, the longer the better, of a silky texture and not in the least woolly, and it must be straight. To put it briefly—a structurally sound small dog lies beneath the profuse white coat.

GOOD FOX-HUNTING PROSPECTS

By FRANCES PITT

AUTUMN is passing, leaves are fluttering earthwards, and November is almost with us, that month which means so much in the fox-hunting year, for with it opens the season to which the autumn cub-hunting has been a prelude, a time of preparation.

What of the cub-hunting: has it been good or the reverse? A dry spring was followed by a wet period in the late summer, with consequent growth, lush and rampant, of undergrowth in the woods. Every coppice was and is a tangled jungle of briars and bracken, a jungle in which the slim fox-cubs can slip about with ease, but which is almost impenetrable for the much bigger and stouter hounds. Conditions have favoured foxes rather than huntsman and hounds. Every cub accounted for has been a testimony to the perseverance and endurance of both the pack and the man carrying the horn; it has also been a testimony to the way the young entry, the young hounds running with the pack for the first time this autumn, have taken to their job. Thick coverts teach the "young'uns" to draw, hunt and drive on through the bushes, without shirking or skirting.

A damp countryside usually means plenty

The past summer has seen a decided comeback on the part of the rabbit. Farmers, pest officers and others concerned with limiting its numbers have worked hard and done their best, but the irrepressible rabbit is bobbing up, not only here and there, but in almost all localities. White tails flirt across the dewy turf of dawn and again at dusk. Most suggestive of all, we find rabbit casualties on the highway, a thing we had forgotten.

And how does all this affect the fox? Not much, in my opinion. Just as Reynard was little distressed by the decline of the rabbit, so he does not appear to be much influenced by its reappearance. The fox is an animal of catholic tastes. A pet fox of mine would do anything for jam. It has many items on its menu, including field voles, long-tailed mice, beetles, frogs, rats and grey squirrels. A rabbit is not to be despised, in particular a young one from the nest, but rabbits are not essential. So what of the fox population in England to-day and what of its prospects for the season of 1957-58?

there is public opinion. Among town dwellers there are people who think it wrong to hunt any animal, particularly if pleasure is derived from the chase; but the great majority of country people who live among the grim realities of nature, particularly those who have had poultry taken by the fox, realise not only that foxes must be controlled, but that a pack of hounds is a humane way of doing it. The countryside as a whole ardently supports the time-honoured sport, as witness the crowds of foot people and people in cars that attend the meets, especially the opening ones and the Boxing Day functions.

The years slip by, fashions change, even in the conservative hunting field, but there is one thing that remains unaltered and that is the spit-and-polish which precedes the opening meet. Oh! the cleaning of tack, the rubbing up of bits and stirrups and the polishing of brass buttons! For the first day of the season everything from the rider's head-wear to the last hair of his horse's tail must be as smart and spotless as elbow-grease can make it. But, shades of the great, old-time, departed huntsmen and stud-grooms, most of the spit-and-polish is applied



THE GARTH CUB-HUNTING AT WARFIELD, BERKSHIRE. Conditions have favoured foxes rather than hounds during cub-hunting this year, but the prospects for the coming fox-hunting season are good

of scent, and it seems to have been, as a whole, a good-scenting cubbing season. Reports that I have received from various districts refer to more than the average of good scenting mornings. A fair scenting autumn seems to be the general verdict, with quite a few foxes about.

It is not long since we were speculating about foxes and rabbits. What would be the effect on the fox population of the virtual disappearance of the rabbit from so much of Great Britain? As the rabbit waned before the onrushing myxomatosis, we looked around to see what was becoming of the fox. It was something of a shock to realise that *Vulpes vulpes* was carrying on much the same as usual! There were rumours of smaller litters in some districts, but definitely there was no general reduction in the numbers of the fox; indeed, it seemed almost the reverse. Foxes were not only to be found in normal situations, but appeared in unexpected places, such as in urban areas and on the fringes of towns. These foxes were not half-starved or even in moderate condition; they were fat and prosperous. So were the foxes of woodland and hillside.

The fox prospects appear to me to be pretty good, and above the average of many past seasons. It looks as if most packs will be kept busy, finding perhaps more foxes than in pre-myxomatosis days. This I believe to be partly due to the disappearance of the old-time, professional rabbit-catcher, who as a destroyer of foxes had few equals. With the wiping out of the rabbit he found himself unemployed. He had to look around for another job, to the benefit of those creatures that had suffered so terribly in his gins and snares. His departure from the scene made all the difference to Reynard.

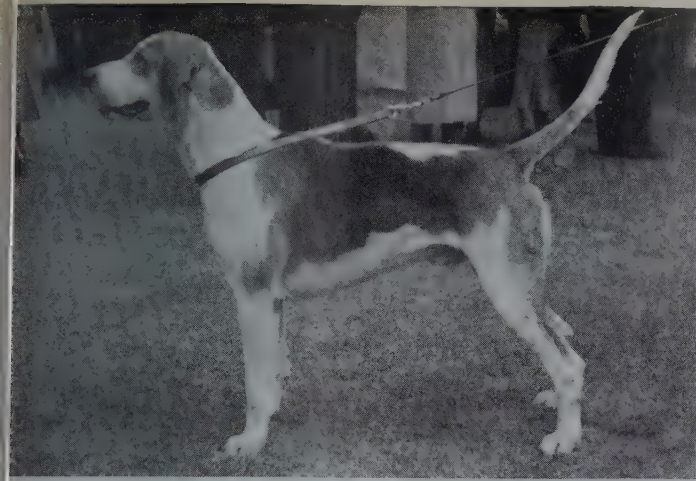
Of course, if the rabbit returns in any number we may see likewise a return of the rabbit-catcher. But that lies in the more distant future. We are now only concerned with the coming winter. Looking at the months approaching, considering things from the vulpine standpoint, we must visualise foxes as pretty numerous in most localities.

Our verdict on the fox is therefore one of "all right," but what of other factors that have influence on the sport of fox-hunting? First

by girls! What would these worthies say if they could come back and see our lady grooms, girl whipper-ins and feminine helpers in general?

For some years past the female element in stable, kennel and hunting field has been growing steadily. At a cub-hunting fixture not long ago I counted twenty mounted followers, all of whom were women, and I did not see one man. This tendency is reflected also in that wonderful organisation the Pony Club, which goes from strength to strength, but has a big preponderance of girl members. Their brothers seem more preoccupied with machinery. To-day the girl groom has largely replaced the male strapper, women whips are legion, women huntsmen quite common and lady masters two-a-penny. This tendency seems likely to be accentuated in the coming months.

The popularity of the girl groom may in some small degree be attributed to the fact that she usually costs less than her male counterpart, which is a serious consideration, for it is the steadily rising cost of labour, fodder for horses and food for hounds that provides one of the major problems in running a pack of hounds.



THE PETERBOROUGH SHOW CHAMPIONS OF LAST SUMMER WERE TRULY FINE HOUNDS. THEY LOOKED GREAT FOX-CATCHERS AS WELL AS SPLENDID SPECIMENS OF THEIR BREED." Heythrop Spanker '56, the champion dog hound at Peterborough, and (right) Quorn Goater '55, the reserve champion dog hound

Subscriptions and revenue from other sources do not rise at a corresponding rate, though it is amazing the amount of money that can be raised in the average provincial country by an energetic secretary and an enthusiastic committee. Hunt balls, hunt dances, whist drives and point-to-point race-meetings are wonderful helps, yet nearly every hunt secretary thinks regretfully of the good old days when there were a number of big subscribers who could be depended upon for handsome cheques. The days of large landowners and big subscribers are gone, the hunt to-day being a democratic affair depending on the goodwill and hard work of many small supporters, a goodly proportion of whom are connected with farming, either as occupiers of land or as relations of those concerned with agriculture.

Each season finds the agricultural element more pronounced in hunting affairs, which is a grand thing, for it is only right that those who occupy the land over which the sport takes place should have a big share in its control. There are to-day many farmer masters.

Now what of the sport itself? Land and roads are full of machines, every highway is a roaring stream of motor traffic and horses and hounds are usually conveyed to the meet in the morning and home again at night by horse-box, van and trailer. Looking ahead to the months and days of this coming season, I visualise much enjoyable sport, but mostly of the pleasant moderate description, for foxes can no longer make good points with ease, what with tractors in the fields and roads thick with cars;

moreover, hounds are liable to be hindered by many smells from the stink of petrol fumes to the latest thing in fertilisers.

With regard to hounds, the trend of modern breeding becomes more and more apparent. It favours the quick, active hound on sensible, natural feet and legs, with quality and substance, but neither heavy nor clumsy, a very different animal from the heavy creature on stilt-like legs and so-called cat feet that was the fashion some years back. The Peterborough Show champions of last summer were truly fine hounds. They looked great fox-catchers as well as splendid specimens of their breed, obviously having that nose, determination and drive which were never more essential in a foxhound than they are to-day.

There is, however, one respect in which the hounds of this present season will show a likeness to their predecessors of the beginning of last century, and that is in the variety of their colour and markings. The old-time English foxhound was of almost any pattern and hue, with a considerable preponderance of white and light coats. The beginning of this century saw much selection for colour, for example the famous Belvoir tan. Our masters to-day have reverted to the old maxim that a good hound cannot be a bad colour, and we see white hounds, badger pies, hare pies and lemons, as well as more orthodox colours and patterns, which not only add variety to a pack, but can be an advantage in the field. A number of hounds of Belvoir tan, each as like its fellows as the proverbial peas out of the same pod, are not

easy to see from afar, and it is ever difficult to distinguish individuals even at close range. Now to-day, with barbed wire a feature of almost every fence, it is not always possible to keep in the same field with hounds, and huntsman, whippers-in and followers are more often some distance in the rear. Then light-coloured hounds are much easier to spot than darker ones.

Mention of barbed wire reminds me of the difficulties connected with getting to hounds in these times, which seem to increase as the seasons go by. In some fortunate countries a great deal of wire is annually removed, jumping places being made in hedges where it cannot be taken down, and this makes it easier to ride fairly straight; but in many districts, especially in the smaller hunting countries where finance is a problem, those who endeavour to ride to hounds often have an exceedingly difficult task, finding it almost impossible to keep in touch with hounds on a good scenting day.

Yet despite all difficulties and troubles, the ardour of those who love the chase of the fox seems to increase rather than wane. This applies to all types of followers, those on horseback, those in cars and those on foot. Far from there being any diminution in the numbers of followers, fields seem to swell each year and will, no doubt, be bigger than ever this season. Fox-hunting, like all live and virile things, changes in shape and character, but it is still, and seems long likely to be, a feature of the English country scene.

DRY FLY ON THE BUBBLE FLOAT

By GEORGE WOOD

IT seems curious that, with good fly fishing so scarce, there are in this country thousands of acres of water, well stocked with trout which are literally out of the reach of the angler. True, he is welcome to pay his daily or weekly fee for fishing the water, and may have good sport, but he will not be able to cover as much as one hundredth part of it with his flies. I refer to the many large lakes and reservoirs where no boats are available and where, in some cases, no wading is allowed.

A good example is a chain of reservoirs in the north of England. These semi-natural lakes lie in beautiful surroundings, and are quite easily accessible. They cover more than three hundred acres, but there are no boats and wading is forbidden, so that fishermen can only touch the fringe. Even so, the yield of trout was nearly three thousand in 1955 and well over two thousand in 1956. How many good fish must there be in this water which have never seen an artificial fly?

The angler may be exasperated by seeing the rising trout well out of his reach, but he can do nothing about the provision of boats. There is a way, however, by which he can double the area of water covered by his flies. I refer to the bubble float. This is a small round plastic container—the type I use is 1 in. in diameter—

into which water can be admitted to control the amount of buoyancy. It is best used with a light spinning rod, a fixed spool reel and a nylon line of about three pounds breaking strain. When one is fishing the dry fly by this method the line does not lie on the water, so that for large trout a heavier line may be used, but the light line gives a longer range.

When these plastic floats were first used for fly fishing it was the practice to attach them between the line and the cast of flies, but for dry fly work it is much better to fasten the float to the end of the line, and to use two droppers some distance above it. After the cast has been made the line is lifted from the water and the flies are allowed to dap gently on the surface. The distances between the dropper flies and the float can be varied according to individual preference, provided that the upper fly is quite clear of the rod tip when the cast is made.

This method of fly fishing can be successful in a flat calm when an ordinary fly line coming on to the water would put down every fish within 50 yards. The best way in calm water is to cast the bubble beyond a rising fish and to work it gently back until the dapping flies are over him. The slowly moving bubble does not alarm the fish, and if the flies are right he will be tempted.

Best of all I like to use this method of presenting the fly to the trout when there is a light breeze on the water. It is fascinating to use the breeze to sail the bubble into position so that the flies cover a rising fish. It may be necessary to alter the amount of water in the float until the wind moves it at just the right speed. The gentler the breeze the more buoyant the float should be.

This way of fly fishing is useful on rivers as well as on lakes, but it should be confined to the slow-moving pools. Here the advantage is the absence of line on the water rather than the increased range. The float should be fairly well filled, so that it will move without disturbing the water unduly.

The amount of water covered by this method of fishing will vary with the weight of the float, the thickness of the line and the skill of the angler.

Most people will be able to cast at least half as far again as they can with the orthodox fly-fishing outfit. This means that an angler, without moving his position, will have in the half-circle within his range twice as much water as could be covered by the ordinary fly line and cast. Presumably twice as many fish will be given the opportunity of rising to his flies.

A COLONY OF ALPINE SWIFTS

By SETON GORDON

IN Britain the alpine swift is rare, and its appearance is a great thrill for ornithologists, for it is an exciting bird, larger than the common swift and even faster in its flight. It is easily distinguishable from our common swift by its larger size, pale brown upper parts and white breast and belly. One of its unusual appearances in this country was when a flight of nine entered a bedroom of a house in Kent, overlooking the English Channel, on May 16, 1916. This was during an intense period in the first World War, and it is possible that the birds were disturbed and bewildered by the shattering cannonade.

One of the largest colonies in Europe of the alpine swift—it consisted this summer of 169 pairs—is in the round tower of the old Jesuit church at Solothurn in Switzerland. Here careful and minute observations on the birds' breeding habits have been made, over many years, by a local naturalist, Herr Hans Arn-Willi, to whom my wife and I are indebted for a memorable evening high up in the interior of this church, which dates from 1689. The cold weather experienced this year in Switzerland during May and the first three weeks of June slowed down the nesting cycle of the swifts, one or two of which actually succumbed to hunger and cold. At the time of our visit, on June 25, not all the birds had laid, although neighbouring nests held broods of different ages. One bird had been brooding closely for four days, yet she had not laid her first egg. The usual number of eggs in a clutch is three, but this year, because of the scarcity of food, clutches of two have been usual. The eggs are rather large, white and polished, and very elongated. Most of the nests are built on the floor of the tower just inside the eaves. They are small and very neat and are made almost entirely of the sticky bud-cases of the beech, which are blown from the branches of the trees and are caught in mid-air by the swifts. The adhesive quality of the bud-cases is heightened by the glutinous saliva of the birds, and the result is a nest that will last for years. It might be thought that the wall of the nest, when dry, would be brittle; actually it is almost like rubber, and Herr Arn-Willi showed us that the saucer-like nest could be bent with considerable force and vigour without harm.

It was a memorable experience, seated in a small observation post in the twilight of the ancient tower, to await at sunset the arrival of the alpine swifts. During our wait we learned interesting facts from Herr Arn-Willi. It was unexpected to be told that the birds arrive from Africa almost, sometimes quite, a month earlier than the common swift. This year the first bird was seen on March 29. The young leave in September and the parents not until early October. The parents remain, therefore, at their summer haunts for six months, whereas

the common swift's stay is little more than three months. Herr Arn-Willi believes this is due to the alpine swift's love of sleep. He has found that, even at midsummer, they roost for approximately twelve hours. The young, being fed for a fewer number of hours each day, grow more slowly. Careful investigations show that they remain in the nest for eight weeks.

About seven o'clock in the evening alpine swifts began to appear at small holes under the eaves, alighting noiselessly and remaining a few seconds before going to their nests. Those that had brought insects for their young arrived with their pouches full of food—food captured perhaps on the slopes of the Alps on the far horizon. One little company consisted of seven pairs; some of the nests were actually touching. The new arrivals took up their roosting stations clinging to the wall, but two birds rested on a cross beam, close together like love birds. When the swifts descended into the interior of the building, to their roosting stations a few feet below the eaves, they did so diagonally, creeping down with their claws gripping the walls. The alpine swift has remarkable claws. When a young bird is lifted from the nest, even before it is feathered, it clings to the human finger and even when held upside down maintains its grip.

The intimate acquaintance of Herr Arn-Willi with the individual swifts of the colony was shown when he took us to see a bird brooding on her eggs. When he attempted to push her off the nest she attacked his hand angrily. He said that this was the only bird in the whole colony to show fight when disturbed in this way.

The first record of this alpine swift colony at Solothurn occurs in the year 1830. The maximum number of pairs in any one season since careful records have been taken is 229. Many of the birds have been ringed and are now old friends. By ringing, Herr Arn-Willi proved that in one pair the male returned for 18 seasons and the female for 10—showing that the alpine swift is potentially a long-lived bird. One, taken by air to Nairobi in Kenya by Professor Geigy, of Basle, and released there, was later found at its nest in Solothurn.

On the day of our vigil in the tower the swifts were later than usual in returning: Herr Arn-Willi explained that this was due to the poor weather and consequent scarcity of insect life. A bird with the wing power of the alpine swift, which some authorities consider to be the fastest bird that flies, ranges far for food, and Herr Arn-Willi believes that when the weather in Solothurn is



A STARTLED ALPINE SWIFT TAKING REFUGE AGAINST THE TIMBERS ABOVE ITS NEST. The photographs on this page of this little-photographed species were taken at a colony in Lucerne

wet, but it is fine in the district of the Alps, his swifts fly there to feed and gather food for their young. As the birds one by one came in from their hunting the church tower was filled with their musical high-pitched trilling cries.

When we left the old church and looked back at the tower, we saw late-comers still flying in to the small holes. Their flight was more effortless than the flight of the common swift, and reminded us of shearwaters gliding in at evening to their nesting island from the Atlantic.

In some mountainous valleys of Switzerland alpine swifts are said to share a cliff with colonies of crag martins, but it is worth recording that in Switzerland the alpine swift is less of an alpine bird than the common swift. At Saas Fee, Zermatt and other townships standing between 5,500 and 6,000 feet above sea level it is common swifts that are seen dashing madly in small parties above the village streets, or circling the tower of the local church, and it is my experience that alpine swifts are only very occasionally present. This may be explained by the fact that Switzerland is near the northern limit of this bird's breeding range in Europe, and that it is less fitted to cope with the frequent changes in weather in the upland districts.

When we arrived at Saas Fee on June 26 the snow was drifting heavily on the Alps and the temperature was that of a March day. Although the sun shone brightly not a swift was to be seen. The next morning the temperature suddenly rose to summer level and common swifts were everywhere. They must have been held immobile by the complete lack of insect life and by the cold. Subsequently we saw more than once on fine warm days parties of common swifts 8,500 to 9,000 feet above sea level, and at times pairs visited Rifflealp, 7,300 feet, where we stayed. But we saw no alpine swifts at this height.

Illustrations: Herr E. Benz.



YOUNG ALPINE SWIFTS AT THE ENTRANCE TO THEIR NESTING-SITE

IMPRESSIONS OF THE DAIRY SHOW

By CLYDE HIGGS

THE 71st Dairy Show at Olympia carried as much new look as is possible in bringing the country to town. Regulations and restrictions limit the Council's efforts to increase the Show's attractions. The criticism that the cows—the basis of the whole dairy industry—were tucked away in a far corner of the Grand Hall can be explained: they have to be, for that is the only place which meets the conditions about drainage and so on.

More animals were forward than last year. Friesians topped the poll and Ayrshires were second, with fewer Scotch animals. Mr. John Bourne, from Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, finished up his season in a blaze of glory by providing many prizewinners, including Snowhill Nonny, the supreme individual champion and first in the lactation-production-inspection classes. She produced 4,700 gallons of milk in three lactations. This competition, with emphasis on long-term performance, cuts out most of the gamble of the show-ring.

At the judging by Mr. Frank Palmer for the Bledisloe Trophy, speedily and satisfactorily performed, the usual enthusiasm was increased by the presence of the President, the Duke of Edinburgh, just returned from America. The diligence with which he carried out his duties at the Dairy Show and earlier at the Royal Show is an example to presidents who take such occasions less seriously.

A fine team of Shorthorns went to the top on inspection (the breed has staged a come-back after rather ragged representation recently), but their lead in marks on looks only gave them third place to the victorious Ayrshires. These were a grand lot, developed to meet a milking-machine age, but they beat the Friesians (this breed produces more than half the country's milk) by only $\frac{1}{2}$ marks in 1,146. The Buckhurst Cup went to a Jersey, Polperro, shown by Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd-Jones. She was seventh on inspection, but reached the top by merit—1,660 gallons at 6.76 per cent. butter-fat with her seventh calf.

De-horning grows more popular as the number of yards and parlours increases. A third of the national milk-recorded cows are de-horned, and the competition promoted by the Hides and Allied Trades Improvement Society for the best de-horned animal was won by an Ayrshire cow, one of the Bledisloe team—a sign that pedigree breeders are getting less horn-conscious. Taking them all round, the cows were a good lot, even by Dairy Show standards.

In alternate years heavy machinery comes to the Show, and with seventy more trade stands than last year this meant a full house. Huge outfits to treat and bottle thousands of gallons of milk hourly, bottle-washing machines which automatically de-crate and re-crate bottles, and other complicated equipment, were of interest not only to dairymen, but to the general public as well.



WINNER OF THE BUCKHURST CUP AT THE DAIRY SHOW AT OLYMPIA: THE JERSEY COW, POLPERRO. In this competition points are awarded for milk and fat production in three successive lactations and for liveweight and inspection

The dairy farmer wanted to know how to produce milk more cheaply, and that was the theme on many stands. The increasing volume of milk depresses the price and encourages farmers to try to maintain their incomes by turning out still more milk at lower cost. Interest in the new farm improvement grant encouraged exhibitors to show how to make the best use of it and, for farmers who are fortunate enough to be able to erect new buildings, there was plenty of choice in style and equipment.

Labour is an important factor in the cost of milk production: milking is no longer a simple job with bucket and stool. Now it needs complicated machinery with a technician to look after it. He used to be called a cowman. There is scope for work-study before putting up a topical milking parlour, whether it be herring-bone, abreast or tandem: all types could be seen. The "dungdozer," which by a flick of a switch clears the cowshed gutters and elevates the muck into a trailer ready for carting away, is a useful idea for cowsheds, although the trend is towards yards which ripen manure and need only occasional cleaning out.

Immersion cleaning has reduced the time needed for tiresome washing-up. Now milking machines can be sterilised while they rest between milkings, but precautions are necessary and the system does not fit in with every milking method. There were many types of detergents to be seen. Manufacturers may sometimes claim too much for these products, omitting to emphasise the need for care in their use.

It is always hard to keep cowmen looking

smart at milking times. A white linen coat is admirable but does not stay white very long, and is expensive to launder. There were synthetic materials to be seen which, provided they are reasonably treated, help to solve the problem.

The dairy-produce section was brought to the first floor and included ice-cream made from real cream—an item missing for nearly twenty years. The display of cheese was good: there is enough variety of English cheese to suit the most ardent connoisseur; unfortunately there is often difficulty in buying it because caterers prefer to push the foreign stuff. The milk bar did a roaring trade; customers willingly paid half as much again for coloured shakes as for plain, honest milk.

There was a good entry for the first live pig classes. Bacon, said by many to be the finest display ever, was of high standard, as it has to be to meet the stringent grading requirements. The winning sides in the class from pedigree pigs did not appeal to me: they were very lean, thin, and likely to harden on cooking.

The rabbits always interest me, and particularly the antics of exhibitors in bringing their animals to the judge's notice on the show table. Pigeons, as always, were a strong feature with thirty breeds represented. What names they have—Archangels, Pigmy Pouters, Birmingham Rollers, Show Tipplers!

There was a good programme of talks and demonstrations. Unfortunately, it is impossible to fit everything in at a show that has so many attractions, but talks on silage mechanisation and quality-milk problems were most interesting. Why the Milk Marketing Board does not pay producers on the quality of the milk they sell is a mystery: the Board's excuse that there are administrative difficulties is not convincing, as most milk is already tested at regular intervals. There is urgent need to increase the sales of liquid milk, the most profitable market. The roundsmen themselves have no time to promote sales, but vending machines, so popular in America and on offer at the Show by a British manufacturer, which offer half a pint of milk in a returnable container, may help.

Comment on the Show generally was very favourable. There were catering difficulties, as usual, but visitors could make do with the many free samples on offer!



THE TEAM OF AYRSHIRES THAT WON THE BLEDISLOE TROPHY FOR THE SIX BEST ALL-ROUND DAIRY COWS. They defeated the British Friesians by $\frac{1}{2}$ points in 1,146

INGESTRE HALL, STAFFORDSHIRE—III

THE SEAT OF THE EARL OF SHREWSBURY AND WATERFORD By GORDON NARES

In origin a Jacobean house built by Sir Walter Chetwynd, Ingestre was altered by John Nash for the second Earl Talbot about 1810 and restored after a fire in 1882 for the 18th Earl of Shrewsbury by John Birch. It is now regularly open to the public.

THE earldom of Shrewsbury is the premier earldom of England. It dates from 1442, when John Talbot—Shakespeare's "great Alcides of the field" and "the Frenchman's only scourge"—was created Earl of Salop, although he and his successors have always been known as Earls of Shrewsbury. Talbot was one of the outstanding military figures of the later phases of the Hundred Years War, at a time when England's foothold in France was becoming more and more insecure, and, although he was not a great tactician, he had a reputation for leadership and courage: not for nothing did the French quiver on hearing the battle-cry of "Talbot and St. George!" He was killed, at a great age, during the Battle of Castillon in 1453; soon afterwards the English were virtually expelled from France. By his first wife, Maud, Baroness Furnivall, he inherited the estate of Alton, fifteen miles north-east of Ingestre on the River Churnet; it was for centuries one of the favourite seats of his descendants and still belongs to Lord Shrewsbury. The original mediæval castle at Alton was slighted in the Civil War, but several successive buildings took its place, and many well-known architects were concerned



1.—THE ENTRANCE FRONT, FROM THE SOUTH-WEST

in their evolution, notably James Wyatt, Thomas Hopper and A. N. W. Pugin: five years ago the house, which was of unmanageable proportions, was partly demolished, although its remarkable gardens still survive.

Like Alton Towers, the earldom of Shrewsbury has had a chequered descent. For six generations after the death of the first

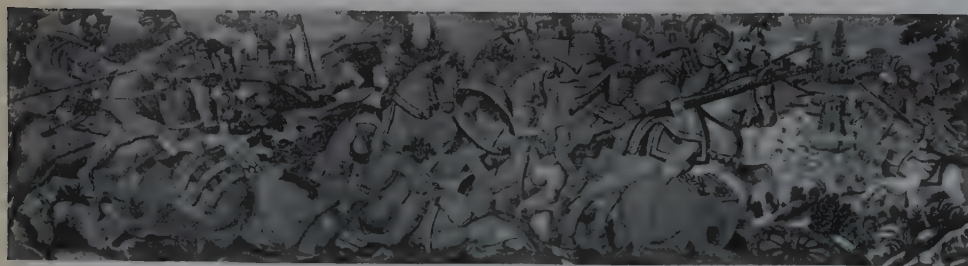
Earl it went from father to son, but when the seventh Earl and his brother the eighth Earl died without male issue early in the 17th century, it reverted to a fourth cousin, George Talbot, senior representative of a branch of the family that stemmed from Sir John Talbot, who was a great-grandson of the first Earl. Thereafter the earldom followed a more tortuous course, and only twice between 1618, when the eighth Earl died, and 1856, when the male line of this branch of the family became extinct with the death of the 17th Earl, did the title pass from father to son. The most important member of this branch of the family was Charles, the 12th Earl, the statesman in the reigns of William III and Queen Anne. He was created Duke of Shrewsbury in 1694, and soon afterwards employed Thomas Archer to build a Baroque palace at Heythrop, in Oxfordshire, which was burnt down in 1831. The Duke died without issue in 1717, when the dukedom became extinct and the earldom passed to a cousin.

The 17th Earl of Shrewsbury died in 1856, as we have seen; he was unmarried and had no close relations. The earldom was claimed by his tenth cousin once removed Henry John Talbot, third Earl Talbot, whose claim was admitted by the Committee for Privileges in 1858. The 18th Earl was descended from the same Sir John Talbot as the previous line of earls, but by his second wife. From this same marriage stemmed the Talbots of Lacock, in Wiltshire—admittedly the Talbot heiress married an Ivory, who changed his name to Talbot in 1714—and to this branch belonged Fox Talbot, the photographic pioneer.

In the two previous articles we saw how the Talbot connection with Ingestre began when the first Earl Talbot inherited it in 1785 from his mother, a coheiress of the second Viscount Chetwynd, who employed Capability Brown to improve his park there in 1756. Lord Chetwynd had succeeded his childless brother, the first Viscount, who in turn had inherited Ingestre from his cousin and godfather, Walter Chetwynd. The latter was the grandson of Sir Walter Chetwynd, the builder of the Jacobean house at Ingestre. Nothing is known of the original manor house, for it was pulled down when Chetwynd built the new house, work on which seems to



2.—THE GREAT HALL AND STAIRCASE



3.—15th-CENTURY SILK PANEL DEPICTING A BATTLE-SCENE. One of a pair in the great hall



4.—THE LONG DRAWING-ROOM ON THE FIRST FLOOR

have been begun immediately he inherited the estate in 1613. Despite subsequent alterations, to which reference will be made shortly, the exterior of the main front of Ingestre (Fig. 1) remains much as it was in Chetwynd's time. The treatment of the façade is typical of Jacobean work: symmetrical and with a high proportion of windows to the red brick walls. At either end are projecting wings, each with two-storeyed semi-circular bay windows surmounted by balustrading. Smaller projections connect the terminal wings to the central block, in the middle of which is a protruding porch with a frontispiece of two tiers framed by pairs of columns and crowned by a pediment. The lower tier contains an arched doorway; the upper tier is filled with heraldry. Over this Renaissance frontispiece the porch bay becomes polygonal and rises above the main roof level to an ogee copper dome, surmounted now by the Talbot's proud crest—a lion stantant, the tail extended, upon a chapeau.

Sir Walter's grandson, Walter Chetwynd, who probably consulted Sir Christopher Wren over the rebuilding of Ingestre Church, as we saw in the first article, is said to have made considerable alterations to the interior of the house in the second half of the 17th century, but it was not until the first decade of the 19th century that any radical changes were made to the exterior. The second Earl Talbot, who succeeded his father in 1793 and was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland from

1817 to 1821, employed John Nash to rebuild the north front and to make various other alterations, which took place between about 1808 and 1813. A drawing by Nash for the north front, reproduced last week, shows an early idea for the existing front, which is in fact more or less a repetition of Sir Walter Chetwynd's south front, except that the central porch is less conspicuously handled and that a row of gables is introduced in place of a level balustrade. Originally, on the evidence of Burgher's engraving reproduced in Dr. Robert Plot's *Natural History of Stafford-Shire* (1686), the end gables on the south front had straight sides, and the existing curved sides

(Fig. 1) are almost certainly due to Nash, for they appear in this form on his drawing for the new north front. To Nash, then, will also be due the "pepper-pots" that emphasise the corners of the wings on each front and decorate the central porch on the north front. Nash is also credited with the cupola that surmounted the south front throughout the 19th century: it had an open lantern derived from that at Hatfield, the home of Lord Talbot's uncle, the first Marquess of Salisbury.

To Ingestre, part Jacobean, part Caroline, part Regency, came disaster in 1882, when the house was badly damaged by fire. Much of the interior was gutted, and many



5.—BESS OF HARDWICK, WHOSE FOURTH HUSBAND WAS THE SIXTH EARL OF SHREWSBURY, IN HER OLD AGE (48 ins. by 39 ins.). (Right) 6.—THE SECOND EARL TALBOT AND HIS YOUNGER BROTHER JOHN AS CHILDREN, BY LAWRENCE, 1792 (90 ins. by 84 ins.)



7.—THE YELLOW DRAWING-ROOM, WITH A PORTRAIT OF THE FIRST EARL TALBOT BY POMPEO BATONI, 1773

pictures and manuscripts were destroyed. The owner at the time of the fire was the 20th Earl of Shrewsbury, grandson of the 18th Earl, who, as we have seen already, inherited the earldom from his kinsman. Lord Shrewsbury immediately began the restoration of the house, and the architect whom he employed was John Birch, of 8, Adam-street, Adelphi, some of whose plans of Ingestre are preserved in the County Record Office at Stafford. Not much is known about Birch—it has not been possible to ascertain whether he was a relation of the architect George Henry Birch, who was Curator of the Soane Museum—but fortunately he wrote a number of books on architectural topics in which both real and imaginary buildings are described and illustrated, so that the names of some of his clients are revealed. It appears from these books that Birch had a fairly extensive practice, and in his *Examples of Stables &c.* (1892), for instance, it is revealed that he designed stables for Lord Bathurst at Cirencester and for Rufford Abbey. Illustrated in this book is the stable quadrangle at Ingestre, built by Birch to accommodate fifty horses at a cost of £18,000. In his description he says that "the new building is made to harmonize in style and feeling with the old Hall—which was restored by the author at the same time," and in the introduction he refers again to the Hall, "which the author restored after the great fire which took place there some seven or eight years ago."

The exterior of the house was rehabilitated exactly on its original lines, except that the remains of Nash's lantern were taken down and the cupola rebuilt in its Jacobean form, as shown in the Burgher engraving. For the interior, however, Lord Shrewsbury and his architect felt free to redecorate the rooms in the style of later periods, although the great hall by which one enters the house is in fact in the Jacobean taste (Fig. 2). It has a ribbed ceiling in a geometrical pattern with pendants, a musician's gallery at the east end and a chimney-piece with a heraldic overmantel in the middle of the long north wall. The walls are panelled in oak for half their

height, and on the plain wall space above hang a number of portraits. To the right of the chimney-piece is a portrait of the Duke of Shrewsbury dressed in the Garter robes and holding his wand of office as Lord Chamberlain; elsewhere in the great hall are portraits of Walter Chetwynd, the builder of the church, and of Sir Robert Peel, who was a friend of the second Earl Talbot. Flanking the chimney-piece are two unusual panels of 15th-century needlework, worked in silk and depicting battle-scenes (Fig. 3).

Opening from the hall, and facing the front door, is the main staircase (right of Fig. 2), which rises in a single flight to a half-landing and then branches into two. On it hangs a huge conversation-piece, signed by Hermann van der Mijl and dated 1732, of John Chetwynd, second Viscount Chetwynd, his wife and family (Fig. 12). It was painted at Maer Hall, Staffordshire, before Chetwynd had inherited his title and Ingestre from his brother. On the left of the painting is Lord Chetwynd's only son, John, who predeceased his father, and on the right is his elder daughter, Catherine, by whose marriage Ingestre passed eventually to the Talbot family.

There is at Ingestre another conversation-piece of great interest, painted at about the same time by Charles Philips (Fig. 9). The scene, according to the label on the back, which was copied from an earlier one about 1759, is a room "in the

present Earl of Harrington's house in Ye Stable Yard, St. James's." The company, who are taking tea and playing cards, include William Chetwynd, subsequently third Viscount (standing in the background on the extreme left), and Swift's friend Lady Betty Germain (sitting by the table beneath the left-hand chandelier), with the Duchess of Montagu, a daughter of the first Duke of Marlborough, beside her (in profile). Seated round the table in the middle are the Duchess of Dorset (on the left), George II's mistress the Countess of Suffolk (facing the artist), General Tyrrell (sitting with his back to the artist) and Walter, first Viscount Chetwynd. The man standing beside Lord Chetwynd is Colonel Richard Pyott, and on the extreme right is the Earl of Berkeley. Philips, whom Mr. Ralph Edwards in his *Early Conversation Pictures* describes as a "natural primitive," had little mastery of composition, but he was obviously adept at catching a likeness and his pictures are a fascinating record of the social life of his time.

This conversation-piece hangs in the yellow drawing-room (Fig. 7), which lies in the south-west corner of the house adjoining the great hall. This room was redecorated in Renaissance style, with pilasters, a deep frieze and panels of arabesque pattern in the ceiling. It takes its name from the boldly patterned yellow wallpaper, against which hang a number of full-length portraits. On the left of Fig. 7 is Elizabeth, Lady Price, painted by Opie about 1798 and bequeathed by her husband, Sir Rose Price, Bt., to his brother-in-law, the



8.—THE OAK ROOM CHIMNEY-PIECE

second Earl Talbot. The first Earl Talbot is the subject of Pompeo Batoni's resplendent portrait to the right of the door; Lord Talbot, dressed in a coat of rose-pink satin, is leaning against a pedestal at the foot of which is Batoni's ubiquitous paniel. The portrait is signed and dated 1773. To the right of it hangs a portrait after Reynolds of Lord Talbot's wife; the original is now in the Beit collection.

North of the yellow drawing-room is the library, filling most of the west side of the house. It communicates with the dining-room in the north front, where there is a full-length portrait by J. K. Hamburger of the 16th Earl of Shrewsbury, who employed Pugin to rebuild Alton Towers; the house can be seen in the background of the painting (Fig. 10). The other portrait that can be seen in Fig. 10 is of Queen Adelaide by Ferdinand Flor. The dining-room contains a notable suite of mahogany furniture brought back from Ireland by the second Lord Talbot after his Lord Lieutenantancy. One of the chairs is illustrated in Fig. 11. They have lions' masks on the front legs, which have claw feet, and the lion motif is continued also in the back. The back legs are unusual in that they repeat the life-like animal form of the front legs.

The principal reception-room at Ingestre is the long drawing-room, which fills much of the first floor in the middle of the south front (Fig. 4). The decoration, which is confined almost exclusively to the ceiling, is in a restrained Rococo manner, which makes an ideal background to a choice collection of 18th-century furniture and family portraits of four centuries. One of the earliest of these portraits is of Bess of Hardwick (Fig. 5), whose fourth husband was the sixth Earl of



9.—CONVERSATION-PIECE BY CHARLES PHILIPS, ABOUT 1732 (40 ins. by 50 ins.)



10.—A CORNER OF THE DINING-ROOM. (Right) 11.—ONE OF A SET OF EARLY-19th-CENTURY DINING-ROOM CHAIRS



12.—THE SECOND VISCOUNT CHETWYND AND HIS FAMILY, BY H. VAN DER MIJN, 1732 (105 ins. by 152 ins.)

Shrewsbury, the custodian of Mary Queen of Scots. The Countess's character was described in the article on Hardwick Hall published in *COUNTRY LIFE* of August 22, 1957, and her pugnacious nature is apparent in this portrait of her in old age. One of the latest portraits is a large group by Lawrence which dominates the east end of the room. It shows the second Earl Talbot and his younger brother John as children, and was painted at Hensol Castle, near Cardiff, in 1792 (Fig. 6). It reveals Lawrence at his most felicitous. The collection of pictures at Ingestre is particularly strong in portraits, but there are several other paintings of interest, among them Stubbs's delicious study of a poodle in a punt, which hangs to the left of the chimney-piece in the oak room (Fig. 8). This picture, which will be familiar to those who saw the Stubbs exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery earlier this year, was bought by the present Lord Shrewsbury in 1951.

Lord Shrewsbury succeeded his grandfather as 21st Earl in 1921, and by virtue of his office as Hereditary Lord High Steward of Ireland—to which the first Earl was appointed in 1446—carried a white wand at the coronations of King George VI and the present Queen. Two years ago Lord and Lady Shrewsbury began to open Ingestre to the public. This year, for a week in May, they transformed the great hall into a theatre in which opera was performed, and the experiment of producing opera in this historic Midland country house will be repeated next year.

ENGLISH BERRIES ABROAD

By GEOFFREY GRIGSON

"THE British Flora"—the sum of our flowers, our trees—"is only an impoverished fragment of the flora of continental Europe." I know. I remembered this true but unwelcome statement one blue day last autumn, up in the Alps. I remember it every time I cross over to that continental Europe, every time I see, just a few miles south of Boulogne or Havre, some ravishing, altogether common flower, which does not even occur as a rare or rarest alien on our side of the water.

I used to defend myself and my own Anglo-Saxon floral *amour-propre*; I used to comfort myself by maintaining that, of course, though the species might be fewer, flowers were nowhere richer, nowhere more abundant, more healthy—Alpine meadows always excepted—than in English woods, along English lanes, on the face of English cliffs; and I thought of bluebells admirably and lyrically mixed with red campion, in May, above the sea near Clovelly or Polperro or Strumble Head.

A blue day last autumn, in the Alps. Very well. Have you, by any chance, a common or garden barberry bush in your garden? A mere *Berberis vulgaris*? Is there anywhere near you, to your knowledge, a wild, at any rate an escaped or abandoned and established, barberry bush living quietly on its own? Do you think you know the barberry?

I did. I thought I knew barberry very well—until that blue day on the climb up towards the passage of Mont Cenis. I could have told you, if you had raised the subject of barberry bushes, quite a packet of facts—if I had had time to look them up in my notes or rout them out of memory or of text-books.

I could have told you that at home barberry wasn't really or usually wild—was doubtfully a native; I could have taken you off, at once, to the site of a mediaeval nunnery where barberry bushes survive along the boundary hedge of the nuns' herb garden. I could have recalled that barberry isn't the only English name, others including wood-sour and jaundice berry and jaundice tree (because the yellow bark was used against jaundice, that most yellow and dismal of complaints). And more commonly, though the name isn't easily explained, I could have told you that barberry is also called pimperidge. I could have added that it is barberry, not for its berries, but because its name in apothecaries' mediaeval Latin was *barbaris*, the barbarian foreign one, the bush perhaps with savage spears.

I could certainly have enlightened you



FRUIT OF THE BARBERRY (*BERBERIS VULGARIS*) WHICH THE AUTHOR SAW GROWING IN PROFUSION ON A SLOPE NEAR THE MONT CENIS PASS

about the fruits in autumn, that they contain malic acid, that they were candied, and jellied and jammed and made into drinks, and that these same pendulous fruits or berries are, of course, bright red.

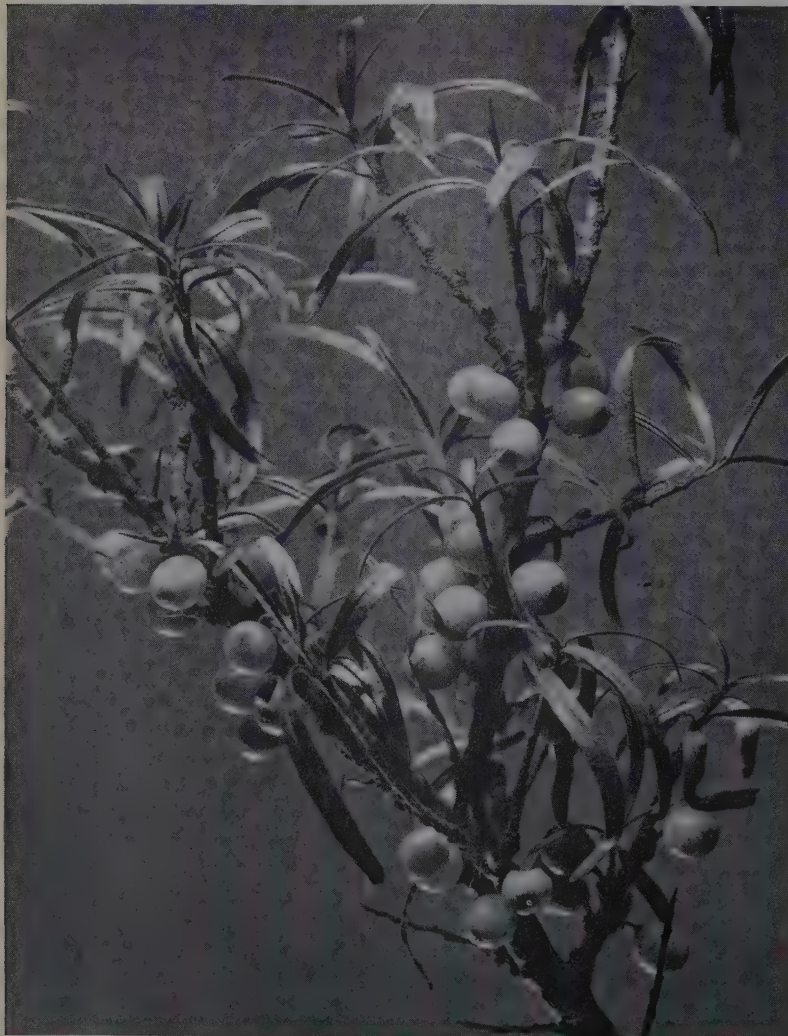
But had I ever experienced barberry bushes, in fruit, in autumn? Never till that moment; never till I stopped between the stream and the rocks perhaps two thousand feet below the bare pass of Mont Cenis for breakfast, and looked around, above the road, while the water boiled and the coffee was brewed.

In plain and marvellous fact the whole great rocky slope above that road was glossy red, deep coral red, letter-box red with the million upon million berries of countless barberry bushes under that blue sky, in the clearest, crispest autumn sunlight.

John Ruskin, aged 16, when he left Dover for France, the Alps, Switzerland, Austria and Italy, in 1835, carried with him a cyanometer for measuring the extra blue of the sky. I should have had a cyanometer, however it works, at that moment in the Alps, but I should also have had an erythrometer, if that would be the right name, for establishing the intensity of the scarlet of all those hanging ear-ring-shaped berries of barberry, so brilliant over such an acreage of slope.

My nuns' few barberry bushes, with their few fruits, far away in Wiltshire: certainly they were an impoverished fragment of these barberries of the Alps. These Alpine bushes were so flamboyant, so ubiquitous, so surprising and so satisfying that I hardly bothered to notice the juniper bushes (the rocks all around were limestone), crowded with bluish juniper berries, twice as many to each twig, twice as large, twice as fragrant and pungent, when I did chew and taste some of them, as the berries on the straggling junipers of Dorset, Wiltshire, Surrey, Derbyshire. And below the juniper bushes and barberry bushes, wasn't there also a vast green mat of bearberry, still with a few dry red berries, for which at home I should have to toil up some mountain in Ireland or Westmorland or the Highlands?

Even then I wasn't finished with berried shrubs uncommon at home and prodigally abundant over these rocks. Do you also know sea buckthorn? I imagined that I knew it. Anyhow, I had enjoyed its silver leaves—and experienced its very sharp thorns, formidable as the triple spines of barberry—at home, by the sea (wasn't it *sea* buckthorn?), on sand dunes, in several counties. What was it doing here, miles from the sea, thousands of feet up, growing out of the shingle of a dry stream? What was a thorny bush of it doing here, by the stove where the water was now boiling for the coffee, all covered with little orange berries, like a foretaste of the oranges on their trees, or the persimmons on their taller trees, which I still hoped to see down the other side of these Alps? And not one bush of it again, but scores, hundreds, thousands.



SEA BUCKTHORN (*HIPPOPHAE RHAMNOIDES*), ALSO SEEN BY THE AUTHOR IN THE ALPS. "Learn your plants in England—yes; but keep your eyes open for the same plants abroad"

I had two floras in the book-box, in the one, an old French flora, *Gillet et Magne*, and the other, an up-to-date Clapham, Tutin and Warburg. "*Hippophaë rhamnoides*," said Gillet et Magne, giving the French name, which is *argousier*, "in the East and the Midi. Edges of meadows." Our own flora was more precise—it only does it grow, the flora revealed, on the coasts of the Baltic, North Sea, and Channel and Atlantic and Black Sea, but on "river banks in Central Europe in the Rhone Valley, etc., etc."

A slight blow; a slight nudge for insularity. A buckthorn we dare to name it, because with us it grows only by the sea. Learn your plants in England—yes; but keep your eyes open for the same plants abroad, and you learn something or two extra, bashing insularity on the head.

Mentioning (sea) buckthorn, I cannot forbear adding a detail or two, from that French flora and from another older English book. The fruits of *argousier*, says the French book, were sought out by birds. In some countries they are employed as a condiment. They are acid and astringent. A decoction of them kills vermin on animals." The English book, Lindley and Moore's delightful old *Treasury of Botany* and *Popular Dictionary of the Vegetable Kingdom*, 1874, rather suggests (a little more generous than *The Times*, when a Channel fog led that old Creature to declare "Continent Isolated") that there exist in the world only Tartary, the Gulf of Bothnia, and England. "The berries," murmurs, of sea buckthorn or salween thorn, which are produced in great abundance, are



AUTUMN CROCUSES. In the Alps the author saw whole fields purple with them

yellow and of an acid flavour. The Tartars, it is said, make a jelly of them, and the fishermen of the Gulf of Bothnia prepare from them a fish-sauce; but in England they appear to be neglected."

Berries were still in evidence when I started again down, or rather up, the road, because not far away there stood upon ragged patrol a clump (most, but not all, of its berries now gone) of dwarf elder; but I

shan't be drawn into saying very much of that particular plant. It confirms the rule, all the same, about the "impoverished fragment." For each single widely-spaced road-side clump of dwarf elder in the counties of England, a thousand clumps are nourished along the roads of France or Italy or Spain.

Does it have a bad effect, finding that across the water one of your special choice treasured home rarities isn't rare at all? I mean, when you come home, does the rarity lose its savour, lose caste, rank, prestige, beauty, and seem positively common—in another sense?

I am not quite sure. Long before reaching the Alps, then in the Alps, and then below them on the other side, and then again in the Apennines, last autumn, I saw a vast acreage of one of my favourites, the autumn crocus, the naked nanny. Acreage, I say; not patch by patch. In fields—fields purple with autumn crocus. Along roads—road verges purple and glistening with autumn crocus—and up purple hillsides and purple mountain sides.

Our first empurpled fields we greeted with shouts, our next ones with a look, our later ones with indifference, as though these Continental naked nannies were no more than the dandelions or daisies at home in the cow leaze. When I came back, I must confess that I did not bother to make my late autumnal pilgrimage to any of the few isolated colonies of autumn crocus in our own Wiltshire neighbourhood. But another year, after no seductive journey into foreign parts and foreign floras?

THE BEDLINGTON FLYER

By HENRY TEGNER

HE was just about the ugliest horse I have ever seen. He seemed to have been put together all the wrong way, and rather reminded me of one of those oddities which used to be shown at country fairs. He was a poor flashy-chestnut in colour. To add to his natural physical imperfections someone had made an awful mess of docking his tail, which he could barely use to stand straight up like a sore thumb. His hogged mane looked as if it had been trimmed with a pair of blunt garden shears. His owner, however, quite blatantly described him as a Welsh cob. The Principality certainly could not be proud of him.

I first saw the little gelding at a local flower show at Bedlington in Northumberland. Towards the end of the afternoon there were to be some horse sports. One or two competitors were exercising their entries in a part of the field behind the Women's Institute tent. A girl, who could scarcely have been more than 12 years old, was riding the gelding bareback. The pony had only a rope halter on his head. She guided the animal without any difficulty. She put it at a small post-and-rails which someone had set up behind the tent. The gelding trotted up to the ringless obstacle to hop over it like a cat. When the pony moved he became a different creature. At the trot he had a smooth, swift, high-stepping action.

Up here in the pit villages, trotting matches were popular sporting events until quite recently. A lot of money was bet on these contests. I felt pretty certain that the ugly little gelding must have some trotting blood in his ancestry. Otherwise it was difficult to account for his spanking pace at the trot.

Later in the afternoon I saw him win the pony-leaping with a clear round which beat all the other entrants. I was interested in the little horse. I went round behind the collecting ring where I found him being walked around by the girl. The red silk rosette had been tied on to the pony's checkered brow-band; it looked like a scarlet flower tucked behind a clown's ear.

"You've got a grand lepper there," I said to the girl.

"Aye," she said. "The Flyer's a grand lepper."

"How much do you want for him?" I asked. Quick as lightning she came back with her answer.

"Me Dad wants sixty pun for him."

"Let's have a look at his mouth," I said.

I parted the pony's lips. Long, yellow incisors proclaimed considerable age. Both his front legs had been heavily fired at some time. He stood well over at the knees. The best thing about him was his eyes, which were clear, bright and kind.

I did not see the Bedlington Flyer again until Boxing Day. Hounds had a traditional meet in the town of Wansbeck on that day. The Mayor used to turn out in his chains of office and the horsemen were treated with free stirrup cups all around. We never cap on Boxing Days so I had not much to do before we moved off to the first draw.

I looked around the field to see who was out. A lot of the regular members dodge the Boxing Day meet, but there was a good sprinkling of farmers and also the odd lot you usually get out on these holiday meets. I noticed one of the town councillors on the Flyer. I knew he had served in the desert against the Turks in the 1914-18 war in some mounted unit. He was keen enough, but could not afford to hunt much himself. He occasionally got a free ride and he always made a point of coming out with us on Boxing Day. He had obviously taken immense care with his clothes that day. His dark coat, slightly green with age, had been brushed till it had a sheen on it, and the chains of his old military spurs were glistening. He wore one of those old-fashioned bowler hats, tall in the crown.

The Bedlington Flyer had been done up to kill: his mane was hogged, he had a check brow-band on and a huge red bow on his tail. I don't think the pony was a kicker but apparently its owner was not taking any chances. I saw the Flyer take a real good hold of his bit and then bore through the crowd to get to hounds. Once he found himself behind the pack he settled down to a quiet hound jog.

The first draw was the bracken-clad slopes behind Newminster Abbey. You go through a gate and down a lane past the old ruins of the Abbey, before you come to a big field. Once the Flyer felt grass under his feet he began to play up: he must have been stuffed full of corn for the occasion. I felt sorry for his rider. Suddenly the Bedlington Flyer evidently thought he'd like a good roll and began to go down on his

knees in a particularly dirty corner of the field. I saw what was about to happen.

"Hit him," I yelled at the mounted councillor, but it was too late. Man and rider eventually got together again, although they were both pretty well soiled.

Rather to my surprise, hounds soon found a fox and we had a pleasant slow hound-hunt. Hounds got their fox to ground at Cock Hill at a quarter to two. The few thrusters who were out with us that day doubtless regarded this Boxing Day effort as a slow dawdle, but I enjoyed it.

As I had had a long hack over to the meet I decided to go home. The rider of the Bedlington Flyer was apparently of the same thought. I came across him struggling to open a recalcitrant gate out of a field. The cob was standing patiently in a muddy pool while his rider tried to pull the gate open, when, getting fed up with the clumsy performance of the person on his back, the Bedlington Flyer spun round and deposited his rider into the black liquid pool of slime. I admired the performance of the town councillor, who hung on to his bridle rein and never let go. When I came to his rescue he was still clinging to his mount, although he was in a recumbent position.

I got him into the saddle again and we set off on our respective ways home. I said to my companion, before I bade him good-night, that I hoped he had enjoyed his day.

"Certainly," he said, although I thought his tone sounded a little doubtful. "Did you see me take that stone wall? My! this pony can leap," he went on. "There's nothing more exciting than fox-hunting, but my trouble is I don't get enough of it."

I could not help wondering at the man's spirit. Here he was, on one of the few days he managed to get in a season, deposited on the ground in a most ignominious manner at least twice, and still he maintained he had enjoyed his day's hunting. I thought it a pity that the town councillor was not in a position to come out hunting with us more often.

I eventually bought the Bedlington Flyer in spite of his age. I won't say how much I paid for him, but he gave me several seasons of very good hunting. He certainly proved himself worth his weight in gold, although I did not pay that much for him.

FOOD-WARMERS AT THE GEORGIAN BEDSIDE

By G. BERNARD HUGHES

BEFORE electricity or even matches were available to shorten a sleepless night, there were few comforts at hand when the candles guttered out and the mice squeaked and scampered. One was the bedside food-warmer. Some collectors know these companionable little sets as *veilleuses*, delightfully named from the French verb *veiller* (to keep vigil through the night). Fewer collectors, perhaps, realise that English specimens may be grouped into three distinct classes, different in purpose and slightly different in design.

Food-warmers were illustrated by Josiah Wedgwood in his catalogue (1774), described as "Night Lamps, to keep any Liquid warm all night." In Josiah Spode's early pattern books of the 1790s they are hand-painted in full colour and called "caudle-cup or pap warmers," suggesting that they were used mainly by invalids. In the early 19th century the Wedgwood firm catalogued them as "Night Lamps with covered pap warmer and inner pan for water." Pap was an invalid's drink. It consisted of a little oatmeal boiled in milk, strained, beaten with butter and yolk of eggs and flavoured with orange-flower water and ambergris.

The different classes of warmer that the collector may encounter among English specimens are: first, the night lamp, which kept warm a cup of posset, caudle, pap or other bedside drink; second, the toddy-warmer, with a socket rising from the lid in which a tobacco taper burned, dating from the 1780s to the 1830s; third, the tea-warmer in porcelain or bone china, from 1810 to the 1840s.

The food-warmer consists of several units, so that it is unusual to find one complete. There is the hollow, flat-based pedestal, cylindrical or slightly conical. Into the top of this fits the lidded two-handled pot for warming the liquid and inside, on the floor of the pedestal, stands the heating unit. The opening required to insert the heating unit, extending from the base to as much as half-way up, has a shaped outline, often topped with a cyma curve and sometimes bordered with relief decoration.

Two substantial solid scrolls placed about half-way up the pedestal serve as handles, with three projecting lugs below, finger-width apart, enabling the piece to be grasped securely. A boldly fashioned human mask may be introduced over the opening to conceal an air vent, and other vents may be sheltered by ornamental shells or leaves.

After about 1790 handles were usually loops extending almost the full length of the pedestal; less frequently they were of the



1.—DECORATED FOOD-WARMER IN CREAM-COLOURED EARTHENWARE. The night light in the base heated the removable food container above, which has a lid with a candlestick. (Right) 2.—A LEEDS CREAM-COLOURED EARTHENWARE FOOD-WARMER DECORATED WITH PIERCING AND SOLID MASK. Height 11 ins.



double intertwined design held to the pedestal by flower reliefs. The pedestal may be further ornamented with piercings in designs adapted from the silversmiths; these may encircle the pedestal or be introduced above the lamp opening, to make fretted patterns of light. In this case the mask conceals no air vent, but tradition ordained its retention as ornament.

Heat and light were supplied from a small open-flame lamp burning in a pottery font, usually a cylindrical container with a horizontal leaf handle. At first this stood loose on the pedestal floor. By 1790 it was held in a socket which might be a short vertical ring rising from the floor of the pedestal, or a recess sunk into the base. The base itself was recessed on its underside to lift it slightly above the tray when in use. Early examples originally had lamps of the float wick type, burning a round wick made from four threads of cotton yarn and not requiring snuffing. In most lamps the wick was carried on a floating disc of cork, the centre

protected by a covering of copper plate. An oil-burning lamp in the 19th century was covered with a loose lid provided with a central hole for the wick and with three circular air vents to ensure correct capillary action.

The lamp burned whale oil. A law of 1709 prohibited "lamps to be used in dwelling houses wherein any oyle or fat (other than oil of fish) shall be burnt for giving light, under a penalty of 40/-." This Act, not repealed until 1831, but virtually ignored after about 1800, gave candle manufacturers a monopoly of vegetable oils and animal fats. Although best-quality sperm oil was used, disagreeable fumes were emitted which might also flavour the food. A small water-moistened sponge was placed within the pedestal to absorb the fumes emitted during the night and prevent their dispersal through the bedroom.

Eighteenth-century candles were unsuitable for all-night burning, even if used in mortar form, as frequent snuffing was essential. A method of compressing candle wax and tallow more compactly was discovered in 1799 by William Bolts. This so increased burning efficiency that it became possible to manufacture night-light mortars neither smelly nor snuffy. With spermaceti wax, night-light mortar would burn steadily throughout the night without guttering. Although fumes from spermaceti wax contained arsenic, the single small flame was not considered harmful. Wicks were of flax, as cotton was affected by the prolonged high temperature and was less uniform in its capillary action. Those who could afford it preferred mortars of English bees-wax, which emitted a fragrant scent and, on account of its brighter burning, required a smaller flame.

Into the top of the pedestal above the heating unit fits a cylindrical bowl, which may have one or two flat handles moulded into leaf shape and extending laterally. Until about 1820 the cup was supported in the pedestal by a flange wide-spreading flange encircling it a short distance below the rim. The body of the cup fitted loosely within the pedestal, providing a space for hot air between the inner wall of the pedestal and the outer surface of the cup.

After the mid-1820s a loose bowl of hot water was inserted into the opening of the pedestal. This followed the discovery by Cheetham and Woolley, of Lane End, Staffordshire, of a hard, white stoneware able to resist greater heat than any previous earthenware. The bowl was so designed that its flat base



3.—ALMOST IDENTICAL FOOD-WARMERS, ONE DECORATED WITH FLOWER AND BUTTERFLY PATTERNS IN BLUE AND MARKED DAVENPORT, THE OTHER IN PLAIN WHITE GLAZED EARTHENWARE

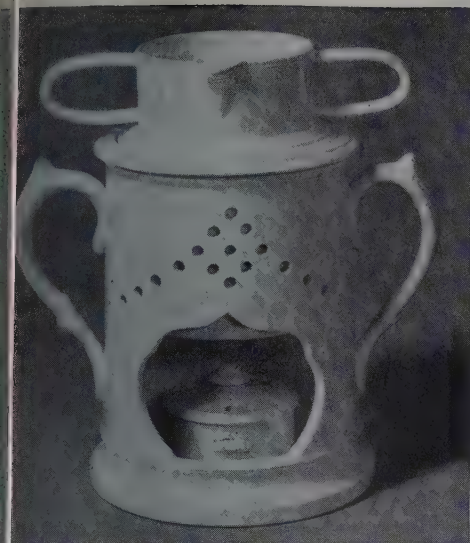


FIG. 5.—LATE-GEORGIAN FOOD-WARMER IN GRANITE CHINA AND ITS COMPONENT PARTS. The cup fits into a bowl for hot water and the bowl goes within half an inch of the lamp

ched to about half an inch above the tip of flame. Examples examined have shown the rim on the base slightly discoloured. The cup was placed in this container, which protected its contents from direct contact with the heat, so that it was in effect a double saucepan. Such a cup might be fitted with a pair of double-stemmed handles and a beak spout, the lid being designed to cover the spout-opening.

The cover at first was low-domed, with a central top supporting a taper socket. When a cup of warm posset was desired during the night, the taper could be lit from the lamp inside the vessel, and the cover placed upon the tray to be used as a taper-stick. When caudle mortars came into use, giving greater illumination than any open-flame lamp, the taper socket was abandoned and the lid shaped with a higher dome and topped by a solid ball finial; later a hollow finial or other simple design was preferred.

The most prized of these food-warmers or night lamps date from the 18th century and were made in the characteristic wares of their day. The delftware potters made particularly attractive ones, their mellow white tin-glazed surfaces hand-painted in cobalt blue. One may note the wreathing visible on the inner wall of the pedestal. This slight unevenness of surface was used to strengthen the body, which softened in one period during firing and tended to

collapse beneath its weight. The slight variation in thickness provided by wreathing was sufficient to prevent this. The shallow cup had a concave base, a spreading flange and a pair of uprising acanthus leaf handles. The underside of the cup was unglazed and a specimen in the Wellcome Museum has accumulated a thick layer of soot.

Many other early food-warmers were of the sharply-defined, plainly handsome Staffordshire salt-glazed stoneware. These were exported to Holland, where they were advertised in late-18th-century newspapers. Many more were in earthenware of progressively harder qualities, and in bone china. From the 1790s some were ornamented with blue transfer prints. Hard porcelain suggests a Continental origin. One may even chance upon a lithophane in which the glassy porcelain of the pedestal is moulded into a strange-looking medley of hollows and projections that, when lit from within, are transformed into a clear detailed picture suggestive of a mezzotint.

The toddy-warmer was an intriguing feature of the English domestic scene, and was used when a couple of friends were smoking and drinking toddy by the fireside. This style of drinking between friends, customary from the 1780s to the 1830s, was first known as hob-nob, eventually becoming the well-known hobnob. The friends wordlessly toasted each other with the clinking of glasses which they refilled from the warmer, the liquor being kept hot by means of a small spirit lamp and covered with a domed lid, its finial in the form of a taper socket, deeper than a candle socket. This form of lid continued on toddy-warmers after it had become unnecessary on the bedside food-warmer. Special tobacco tapers were prepared for smokers, imparting no foreign flavour to the tobacco.

Tea-warmers date from the early 19th century in England and were made in the tough, white bone china then displacing soft-paste porcelain on the tables of the well-to-do. These were similar to food-warmers, but with cup and cover replaced by a tea-pot. They were the predecessors of the early Victorian tea-cosy, a quilted cover fitting loosely over the tea-pot. A tea-warmer was often decorated *en suite* with the tea service, but more frequently it was a separate addition to the tea equipage.

Pedestals, more slender than those of food-warmers, were of two types. One had a side opening for the insertion of the spirit lamp to keep the tea hot; the other had a slightly tapering cylindrical pedestal without a side opening, but separate from the flat base which was rimmed to receive it. Six or eight round ventilation holes encircled the top and bottom of the pedestal. The pedestal was usually designed without handles, although a minority of the less expensive ones had a pair of moulded scroll or knob handles. Into the top fitted a specially

designed tea-pot. This had a cylindrical extension beneath continuing about a third of the way down the pedestal. It was heated with a spirit lamp or with a scented mortar acting as a pastille burner, then a fashionable accessory for perfuming the house. Tea-warmers were not associated with illumination and thus could be heated by means of spirit lamps in the same way as silver kettles, but adjusted to smaller flames.

Food-warmers have been noted bearing the names of Wedgwood, Spode and Davenport decorated in blue transfer, and Swansea, Rockingham and Bloor's Derby in painted enamels. There are antique miniature specimens two to three inches high and Victorian toys of five to six inches.

The collector of these small vessels must be on the look-out for the modern French creations set out to captivate those who delight in backstreet "bargains."

Illustrations: 1, 6 and 7, Victoria and Albert Museum; 3, 4 and 5, Wellcome Historical Medical Museum; 2, Leeds City Art Gallery.



FIG. 6.—KETTLE-SHAPED WARMER IN CREAM-COLOURED EARTHENWARE. Impressed Wedgwood, height 9½ ins.



FIG. 7.—SWANSEA TEA-WARMER MADE IN PORCELAIN, PAINTED IN COLOURS AND GILT (ABOUT 1815). It contains a spirit lamp. Height 8½ ins.

THE FAITH OF BEN HOGAN

A Golf Commentary by BERNARD DARWIN

BEN HOGAN is a man altogether out of the ordinary run, and his book, *The Modern Fundamentals of Golf* (Nicholas Kaye, 21s.), is extraordinarily interesting. He has had Mr. Herbert Warren Wind (who wrote *The History of American Golf*) as a skilful and sympathetic interpreter, but every word of the book, unless I am much mistaken, is essentially his own. All Hogan's views on how to play golf are essentially his own, too, for he thinks almost valueless some pieces of doctrine generally deemed important and stresses others which many might think trivial. And how he has toiled and agonised over this game! It has doubtless been a labour of love or he never could have endured all those weary hours of practice. He is frighteningly in earnest, as witness this sentence about the waggle, one of those relatively minor points which he holds so important as being a rehearsal of the swing: "I know I have sometimes concentrated so hard on the shot I was going to hit that I honestly felt the shot could not fail to come off exactly as I intended . . . I had the definite sensation that I had really hit the shot before I even started my club back."

There is nothing about the art of putting in the book, which may a little disappoint some secret-hunters. Its five lessons are entirely concerned with the swing, as to which, he declares, the player need learn only one: "He uses the same fundamental swing for every shot he plays." Perhaps the best compliment I can pay it is, if I may be forgiven, an egotistical one. I can no longer play golf, and yet as I was reading I continually wondered whether I used myself to do some particular action; if not, what a dreadful pity it was that the book had come too late for me. I periodically got up and tried to put my mutinous limbs into some suggested attitude. In short, I found it fascinating, the more so because Hogan deals with sensations. He declares himself "an advocate of that kind of teaching which stresses the exact nature and feel of the movements a player makes to achieve the result he wants."

Here is a curious little illustration of "feel." "The golf grip," he says, "is bound to function most effectively when the hands and fingers feel thin. Some days they do, some days they don't. Interestingly enough, drinking some

ginger ale because of its effect on the kidneys, seems to prevent the hands from feeling too fat and puffy." That remark reminds me of the brilliant and rather puzzling golfer, Douglas Edgar, who went to America and died young in a mysterious accident. He used to declare that when his fingers felt thin he knew all would be well. Hogan, by the way, in order to keep his fingers warm at Carnoustie carried a hand-warmer in each pocket.

Hogan may appear to some readers to attach almost alarming importance to this "exact nature and feel of movements." He certainly deals in minutiae, as in the matter of the grip which he rightly thinks so vital. And, by the way, his version of the overlapping or Vardon grip is not quite the orthodox one, which he describes as "the little finger riding sort of piggy back on top of the left forefinger." "I would really advise you to hook that little finger in the groove between the forefinger and the big finger." Again he describes with great nicety two alterations he made in his own grip, namely, the change from the "long thumb" to a modified "short thumb," and the moving of his left hand "a good half inch to the left." This last, of which I am sure Henry Cotton would approve, was in order to curb an occasional hook.

Now these certainly are niceties, but let not the reader shy away from the book on this account. In fact, Hogan protests his "genuine conviction" that all that is required for good golf is a relatively small number of "fundamental movements." What he wants his pupil to acquire is a swing that will "repeat." He himself repeats this several times. The player must be able to do the same thing over and over again in all circumstances and despite all manner of pressure.

And how, the pupil may ask, is he to attain this "repeating" swing? I am not going to steal all Hogan's thunder, even if I had the room or the ability to do so; but if I may choose a single theme as his main one, it would be, I think, the picture of a chain of movements, one inevitably following another, to produce the right result. For instance, the right order of events in the upswing is hands, arms, shoulders, hips, and he warns us gravely against the common error of turning the hips too soon. On the down

swing the sequence is exactly reversed and turn of the hips to the left begins the process unwinding. This thought of a chain is new, long absent and one movement will in time lead naturally to its successor. "Don't try to force yourself into these positions," says Hogan. "They're part and parcel of the chain action. You'll move into them if you execute the fundamentals properly."

There is one point, a rather elaborate and difficult one to explain, as it seems to me, which Hogan pays great attention, namely "plane" of the swing. People talk little of the plane and much of the arc, and yet he insists the plane is far the more important. At a rate, it was intensely important to him, and his belief it altered golf and life for him as he was a full-blown professional. "Quite a few of my friends," he writes, "have told me that once they got the idea of the plane into their heads, it worked wonders for them . . . I don't believe it. I really never felt that my own backswing was satisfactorily grooved, until I began to base my backswing on this concept of the plane." And what is that concept? Well, it is most simply described as an angle of inclination running from the ball to the shoulders. The pitch of the angle is determined by two factors: the height of the individual's shoulders and the distance he stands from the ball at address. His shoulders should rotate on this plane continuously inclined on the same angle with the ball they established at address." Hogan wants the pupil to visualise this back swing plane as a pane of glass resting on his shoulders with his head sticking through it, as it inclines upwards from the ball. I am afraid this may be hard to understand. Perhaps it needs a picture and, incidentally, the drawings by Mr. Ravell are extremely good and useful.

Re-reading what I have written (and there are many of Hogan's beliefs I have not touched) I feel anxious lest I make the reader afraid of thinking the book above his head. If so, the fault is mine. Golf is not an easy game to learn or to explain and here then the reader may read for a wet towel for his head; but on the whole the book seems to me wonderfully lucid and helpful. It is the most interesting golf book I have read for a long time.

A COUNTRYWOMAN'S NOTES

By EILUNED LEWIS

WAS it Disraeli who said that the time to live in London is from the first tinkle of the muffin bell to the first note of the nightingale? The muffin men, it seems, never recovered from the food restrictions of the last war. Certainly I have not seen or heard them since; they are already a portion of London's ghostly past. Yet I believe that if one came to life and rang his bell some foggy Sunday afternoon round our square he would do as brisk a trade as the men who cry "Fresh strawberries! The pick o' the morning!" on days in June.

Twelve months ago we returned joyfully to the country with the fall of the leaf, for one need not be a fox-hunter to consider autumn almost the best moment of the year. This time, in a very 18th-century manner, we have come to taste for a few months the delights of "civilised" life, to the street lamp (happily of an old-fashioned shape) shining all night near our door, to our neighbours' cats and the weekly advent of the dustman, to our own fig tree, covered with scores of bullet-like fruit, to the stately beauty of squares and parks and the French bread from round the corner.

The dog, with the passage of years, has become a philosopher. After all there is something to be said for exchanging a rabbitish countryside for the *olla podrida* of a pavement. But as regards Teresa it was a transition of huge importance. Until then her contact with town

life was confined to a distant prospect of Limerick, but she rose to the occasion rather like a spirited horse taking an Irish bank.

"Will I pack the delf now?" she asked, while we were still in the country. No, I said, we should find our own china awaiting us, and my heart sank a little even as I said it, since cherished china (put away for safety on top shelves at the urgent request of our friendly tenants) acquires a terrible patina, a curious Cockney greyness, thick as soup but more adhesive. "Smashing!" is Teresa's favourite adjective of approbation, and she was prepared to apply it to several features of the London house. But I dared not enlist her help over the washing of precious cups and saucers lest the word should prove all too apt.

London water and the stuff horribly named detergent are not the most soothing adjuncts to a task which proved, as always, longer than expected. Old-fashioned Dutch housewives, I have been told, dip their own porcelain—their delf—into a bowl placed by a maidservant on the table before her mistress, at the close of a meal. Vermeer would have done justice to the scene. Although not feeling half as picturesque as that, I could still enjoy restoring to their bright selves my Welsh lustre, the Lowestoft cups (dating from the days before handles) and the familiar lilac and gold of the Coalport tea-service. They and the pictures on the walls

seem glad to be together again, and I too, glad to see them, especially the Warwick Sm water-colours, which bring the light and air of the clouded hills of Wales into this London room.

SO, too, in a different way, do the Welsh county societies of the Metropolis, busily holding their autumn meetings. The objects set out in the rules of one to which I have the privilege of belonging would be a tonic to anyone suffering from home-sickness. They run:

- (a) The promotion of friendly intercourse and good fellowship among members of meetings, social re-unions and other means.
- (b) The fostering of fuller knowledge of the history, folk-lore, literature, art, music, natural history and antiquities of the county.
- (c) The assistance by every means in their power of—shire folk who may stand in need of the influence and help of the Society.

A and C might well belong to a band of ex-Christians, and, although restaurants rather than catacombs are our meeting-place, there is something of the same kinship, a sense of fundamental simplicities about our gatherings which puts me in mind of the early forefathers of the Faith, singing their hymns in an adorned room among the grandeurs of Rome.

This year we have elected for our President a wise and learned professor whose distinct

longs to universities and fields outside his native land. Yet fittingly, it was of the hills of his native county, describing the sweet October weather; "buzzards circling and mewing all day, and a very late curlew just flown over to the sea." By way of consolation, there was an owl hooting in the tall trees of our square when we returned from an evening junketing.

It is the infinite variety of the roots which is surely London's greatest charm, for in the country the foundations tend to be all of a piece. Of our immediate neighbours one is an East Coast Scotswoman and one a Norfolk man, and this evening we await a friend from the French Languedoc. On a golden day recently

I took myself to Hampstead Heath to visit two dear Irish friends, and Teresa and the dog came too. As we drove home through the blue dusk Teresa spoke of the lights of Dun Laoghaire and how she was "after seeing them all strung out" as her ship drew away from the land. She said it was the finest thing she had ever seen in her life.

It will be a sad day for our race if ever the burning lights of satellites and the vastness of outer space replace such homely beacons of the human spirit.

Example in the accompanying cartoon by William Heath. I am not at all sure, however, that some of the cartoonist's points are altogether out of date in 1957: for example, "Ghosts of departed founders"; "Ishan't go in there"; and dirty Father Thames. — WAYFARER, Cornwall.

CORRESPONDENCE

IRISH HORSE TRADE CONCESSION

IR.—The recent announcement that the Irish Government will permit horses to be slaughtered and their meat exported for human food in Europe will mean the establishment of abattoirs in Ireland. The export trade in live horses will continue side by side with the carcass trade, and we have been informed by the Irish Government that there will be no relaxation of supervision over shipping conditions.

The Blue Cross Animal Welfare Society does not claim credit for this change of policy. At the same time it could not have been possible in the atmosphere which prevailed in 1955, when the Irish Government was under violent attack and any concession might have been regarded as a surrender to animal welfare pressure groups—and particularly to English pressure groups. The atmosphere in which it has become possible was created in 1955 when the Blue Cross asked Mr. James Dillon, former Minister for Agriculture, to facilitate an independent enquiry into export conditions. Protests against the trade in live horses had been made for more than twenty years without effect. The Blue Cross took the first practical step. The Irish Government accepted the recommendations of the report made by an independent veterinary scientist, nominated by the President of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.

There has been no repetition during the past three years of the *city of Amsterdam* voyage which caused grave disquiet. The inspection system has been tightened up. Conditions in the ships have improved. Closer supervision has been exercised by the new Equine Research Department, set up after consultation with the Blue Cross and headed by one of

Ireland's—and Europe's—most distinguished veterinary scientists.

The Blue Cross has been attacked for "collaborating" with the Irish Government. The fact is now plain for all to see, that more has been accomplished in three years of quiet, patient negotiation than in twenty-five years of angry ineffectual protest.

Mr. James Dillon began as a Senator Sean Moylan, the present Minister for Agriculture, has continued these negotiations while agreeing to differ with the Blue Cross, which stated categorically in 1955 that it opposed the export of live horses for slaughter. The Blue Cross still opposes this live trade because it believes it to be unnecessary and must involve some degree of suffering or needless discomfort, whatever precautions are taken.

If we have not solved the problem, it has been very considerably reduced and thousands of horses will now be saved the long sea journey. This would be a considerable achievement in any sphere of human conflict or disagreement. It may also well be that if the export of horse meat proves more profitable than the export of live horses, no further legislation will be required. At any rate the conditions for such a change will now exist for the first time.—STUART GELDER, Grosvenor Gardens House, London, S.W.1.

19th-CENTURY RIVER POLLUTION

SIR.—A good deal has been heard lately about water pollution, and one notices that concern is now expressed about the state of coastal waters as well as the perennial question of the poisoning of country streams.

A century or more ago then the state of the River Thames was the subject of fierce criticism, as for

example in the accompanying cartoon by William Heath. I am not at all sure, however, that some of the cartoonist's points are altogether out of date in 1957: for example, "Ghosts of departed founders"; "Ishan't go in there"; and dirty Father Thames. — WAYFARER, Cornwall.

SAVING AN OLD BARN

SIR.—The impressive tithe barn at Church Enstone in north Oxfordshire has recently been in the local newspaper headlines. This mediæval barn is of special interest, as it is one of the extremely few which carry an authentic original date stone. This is now under the roof of an annexe and white-washed; it has a Latin inscription stating that: "This barn was built and founded in the year 1382 by Walter of Wyniforton, Abbot of Wynchcombe, at the petition of Robert Mason, bailiff of this place."

The enclosed photograph shows the reason for some recent publicity. The farmer wishes to put on a lighter roof of asbestos, because he thinks that not only the timbers but the walls also are now inadequate to the weight of stone. Officialdom says "No; this is a scheduled building." So, at the moment, nothing is being done. The farmer has only 70 acres, yet his father and he have in past years spent handsomely on mending the roof of this barn.

I suggest that this might be a proper object for the expenditure of public funds, particularly since public authority is forbidding the farmer to repair in his own cheaper way.—J. D. U. WARD, Rodhuish, Watchet, Somerset.

BY J. L. DAVID?

SIR.—May I express my surprise at your answer to Mr. Donald Angus concerning his portrait said to be of Madame de Montpetit and Made-moiselle Cerisier and attributed to J. L. David (*Collectors' Questions*, October 10)? There does in fact exist a universally accepted catalogue of the *œuvre* of J. L. David which will be found on pp. 631-666 of Jules David's *Le Peintre Louis David* (Paris, 1880). This was compiled by the artist's grandson, author of the volume, from J. L. David's own list of works, from the catalogues of the two posthumous sales of the contents of his studio (1826 and 1835) and from other catalogues and information provided by his family and friends in the intervening years before publication.

This catalogue is not absolutely "complete"; nevertheless it is so nearly so that any picture not listed is *prima facie* suspect unless the quality of the painting is unmistakably authentic and the pedigree unassailable. Mr. Angus's picture is not even referred to by Jules David. Furthermore, your suggestion that for Mlle.

See letter: Saving an Old Barn

Cerisier the name "Sériziat" should be substituted is invalid, since Madame Sériziat did not have a daughter. To anyone acquainted with the work of David it is immediately apparent that this picture is not an authentic work by the master on purely stylistic grounds. Your statements that David's portraits of the Napoleonic era "form the most interesting part of his *œuvre*" and that "it is not always possible to determine with confidence those which are authentic" are to me incomprehensible.

May I suggest that everything points to the fact of Mr. Angus's portrait being a typical production by some Davidian follower or perhaps pupil? His school was very large. There is a place called Guerigny, near Nevers, and this picture may well have been painted there by some local artist at the date specified, namely, 1814.—DOUGLAS COOPER, Château de Castille, Argilliers, Gard, France.

[The expert we consulted writes in reply: Mr. Douglas Cooper's enthusiasm seems to have unbalanced his judgement and his sense of constructive comment. Jules David's *Le Peintre Louis David*, which is well known to me, lists 128 paintings in oil, but Mr. Cooper is apparently ignorant of all the research which has been done since its publication in 1880. Richard Cantinelli, in his *Jacques Louis David*, published in Brussels in 1930, increases the list of authenticated paintings to 216, approximately 90 more than Jules David described, and no recognised authority would be prepared to assert that the list is as yet by any means complete. Others were shown in the bicentenary exhibition arranged by the Arts Council in 1948.

Mr. Cooper complains that the



CARTOON BY WILLIAM HEATH ATTACKING POLLUTION IN THE RIVER THAMES IN THE 19th CENTURY

See letter: 19th-century River Pollution



LARGE POTATO WITH SEVERAL SMALL ONES GROWING INSIDE IT ON A FLESHY SHOOT

See letter: A Peculiar Potato

painting reproduced in COUNTRY LIFE can be rejected on "stylistic grounds," which shows that he is evidently unacquainted with the portraits of Madame Hamelin (in the Washington Gallery), Madame Chagrin (in the Louvre), David's daughter (in private ownership in France) and others which could be mentioned. None of these was listed by Jules David.

It is admittedly unsafe to judge the authenticity of a painting from a rather poor photograph, especially when it has probably been in private hands for many years and the quality of the work may have been masked by injudicious restoration, but I see no compelling reason to alter my opinion. Mr. Cooper's information about the Sériziat family is different from mine, and I question his authority for saying that Madame Sériziat had no daughters. If he has written proof to this effect, I will submit and say that the sitters were probably closely related to M. Sériziat, to whom they bear some facial resemblance.

Finally, the statements that David's portraits "form the most interesting part of his oeuvre" and that "it is not always possible to determine with confidence those which are authentic" are so obvious to the unbiased student of David that they need no qualification. Mr. Cooper may not know that eight or ten pictures attributed to the painter appear in the West End fine-art sales rooms every year—pictures about which no guarantee can be given, although some of them may well be genuine. —ED.]

STRANGE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

SIR,—Two curious stringed instruments owned by a friend of mine are illustrated in my photographs. One is a beautiful bow-shaped karp from Egypt. The soundbox is covered with snake-skin, and the neck is carved from a piece of ivory and terminates in a human head. This, probably, was the type of harp played to provide music for dancing girls when entertaining wealthy families during meals.

The other instrument is a kissar from East Africa. Its soundbox is a hollow gourd, also covered with snake-skin, but the most surprising feature is the tawny fringe across the top bar. It is a part of a lion's mane. The kissar, one of the most ancient musical instruments known, was also used in Assyria, ancient Egypt and Abyssinia. —NORTHERNER, Leeds, Yorkshire.

FEATHERWORK FROM MEXICO

SIR,—I think it possible that the cock-fight pictures made of coloured feathers referred to by Mr. Charles Randall in *Collectors' Questions* (October 10) were made by Mexican Indians.

I have some excellent featherwork cock-fight pictures which I

bought from Mexican Indians at the beginning of the century. They have long been famous for this work. I think that Prescott says somewhere in his *History of the Conquest of Mexico* that Cortes was so impressed by them that he sent some to the King of Spain. —CECIL E. BANBURY (Major), Church End Cottage, Great Horstead, near Buntingford, Hertfordshire.

AND FROM ITALY

SIR,—In *Collectors' Questions* (October 10) you say that most feather pictures belong to the first half of the 19th century, but they were being made long before the 19th century. In the library of McGill University at Montreal there is a book containing 156 feather pictures, of which 112 are of birds and the others of hunters, musicians and familiar figures of the Commedia dell'Arte; the title page states that they were made in 1618 by Dionisio Minaggio, gardener to the Governor of Milan.

A portrait of Pulcinella from this book—actually the earliest pictorial representation of this character that has survived—is reproduced in my *The History of the English Puppet Theatre*, published in 1955. —G. V. SPEAIGHT, 6, Maze-road, Kew Gardens, Richmond, Surrey.

A PECULIAR POTATO

SIR,—The potato shown in the accompanying photograph was lifted in September and kept in straw in a

large heap at the back of one of the two garages here. Recently our gardener brought it to me to show, as he had never seen anything like it before. Nor had I.

It will be noticed that the potato shows signs of having been struck with a garden fork. The whole interior appears to be full of tiny potatoes, and the presence of these is hard to explain.

It would be interesting to know if any of your readers has seen anything of this kind before. At first sight this potato's motherly tenderness for her young might be taken for a prepared joke, but on further examination it will be realised that this is hardly possible. But how did it happen? —C. N. BUZZARD, *The Haven*, Tydehams, Newbury, Berkshire.

[When pulled apart the young potatoes growing in the wound of the old one proved to be on a fleshy shoot, which emerged from an "eye" on the opposite side of the tuber to that shown in the photograph. Potatoes clamped in warm weather often sprout readily and sometimes produce new small tubers outside; in this case the damage to the tissues seems to have encouraged growth inwards rather than outwards. Such an occurrence is seldom seen, because damaged potatoes are usually kept out of store. —ED.]

GEESSE FROM THE CRIMEA

SIR,—A rare event in the history of geese in this country took place a century ago when Lord Dufferin imported a pair of Sebastopol geese from the Crimea. These birds were a little smaller than the geese of this country and were pure white in the perfect form, their back and tail plumage being of a curly nature, as is shown in the accompanying engraving of 1860, when the birds were exhibited at the Crystal Palace Poultry Show.

The geese were obtained at Sebastopol by John Harvey for his nephew, one T. H. D. Bayly, of Biggleswade, and Lord Dufferin brought them home in his yacht. The

birds were regarded as most rare. When they were exhibited at the Crystal Palace they weighed 11 pounds each. In addition to curved and frilled back feathers, they had elongated and twisted secondary quills of the wings. Tail coverts were also elongated and twisted. One would like to know more about the Sebastopol geese in England. They appear to have had the same habits as our native birds. —C. J. ROBB, *Timpany House*, Ballynahinch, Co. Down, Ireland.

A FRIENDLY SOCIETY AT THE INN

SIR,—With reference to Mr. Brand Johnson's letter on friendly societies (October 10), one of the oldest village societies in existence still holds its meetings, as it has done for countless years past, at a local inn. It is Harting

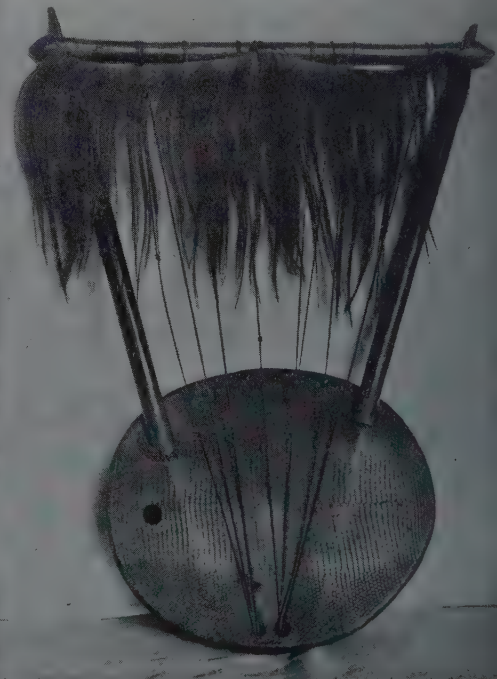


SEBASTOPOL GEESSE EXHIBITED AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE IN 1860

See letter: Geese from the Crimea

Old Club, South Harting, Sussex which is over 150 years old and still keeps up—surely among the last of such associations to do so—its Whit Monday parade followed by a feast at the inn, at which free beer is traditionally provided out of funds.

On Whit Monday morning every year its members, each sporting a red white and blue rosette and carrying a peeled hazel wand, parade outside the inn. The roll is called and, led by the band, they "proceed in a direct and orderly manner to the parish



AN EGYPTIAN HARP AND (right) AN EAST AFRICAN KISSAR, WITH A FRINGE OF A LION'S MANE

See letter: Strange Musical Instruments



EVENING — and one by one men are turning out the lights on their working day. Tonight, quietly at home or gaily abroad, they are once again husbands, hosts, friends among friends. Those who have learned to savour each moment of their leisure hours will crown contentment with a glass (or two) of Dewar's "White Label".



It never varies

Britain leads the World



The start of a new era— nuclear power for the nation

Britain leads the world in the application of nuclear power to electricity generation. The material progress of every industrial nation is always accompanied by a proportionate increase in the demand for electricity. The vigorous development of this new source of power is vital to safeguard our full employment and future

prosperity. The demand for electricity in Britain doubles every ten years. The Central Electricity Authority have already met the doubled demand since 1st April, 1948, and have made provision for a similar expansion in the next decade.

To safeguard and expand Britain's prosperity, a total of £3,350 million will

be spent on the electricity supply industry over the next eight years. This includes plans to build and bring into operation enough nuclear power stations to provide from 5 to 6 million kilowatts of generating capacity by 1965. This will involve expenditure upwards of £1,000 million.

Construction of nuclear power stations is an important part of the overall plan for meeting the ever-growing demand for electricity.

To bring the increasing supply of electricity to consumers, and to make the supply available to those who are waiting to receive it, about £400 million will be expended on new main transmission lines—the 132,000 and 275,000 volt Grid and Supergrid. About £1,000 million will be spent on distribution.

Without this vast electrical development—the new power stations and the new transmission Grids—Britain's prosperity could not be maintained and expanded.



The pylons of Britain bring power to industry. They help to ensure that the factories are kept running and that shops will continue to be filled with good things.

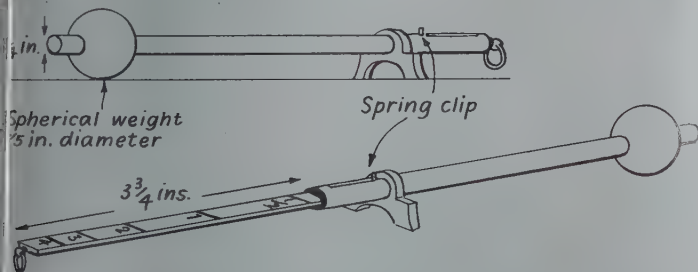
This series of advertisements is being published so that everyone will understand the urgency of the nation's nuclear power programme and the vital need to speed the job.

ch to hear a sermon preached by minister of the parish."

After the service—and it is a that anyone not going into ch shall be fined a shilling—members return to the inn for their meal dinner. This is not quite the repeat it was in years gone by, enormous appetites resulted in pudding being consumed "by the 1," but the traditional supply of ale to members no doubt goes in just as well with the somewhat ter fare of to-day.—P. H. T. ANS, Dale Cottage, Burgess Hill, sex.

DECANTERS FOR CHAMPAGNE

—Major M. C. Gray, in his letter October 10, is correct regarding the of Georgian decanters for champagne in the second half of the 18th century. A bill in the collection of Sir brose Heal refers to a pair of such anters. They were sold in 1755 by London glassman, Thomas Betts, Charing Cross, and invoiced as p. Neat Ice Champagne Quart canrs 1/-." Such a decanter was ovided with a bulbous pocket for extending from the side into the dy. The Claude Beddington collec- n includes a pair of such icing anters decorated with two bands formal tulip cutting on the body;



SKETCH OF A METAL OBJECT OF 1842, WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN A LETTER-SCALE. IT IS SHOWN CLOSED AND OPEN

See letter: For Weighing Letters?

the entrance to the ice pocket is provided with a silver cover with a loose ing handle. These are attributed to 780.

For the most part, however, champagne was served from bottles, round the necks of which hung narrow rectangular bottle tickets of silver, sometimes mistakenly termed decanter labels (see my article, *Silver Wine-labels*, in the *COUNTRY LIFE Annual*, 1955).—G. BERNARD HUGHES, Furze, St. Mary's Bay, Romney Marsh, Kent.

OWNERS OF CROFT CASTLE

SIR,—Those of us who know Croft Castle in Herefordshire will be delighted to read in your editorial note of October 10 that it has been saved

from demolition. As you so rightly say, the public should be deeply indebted to certain members of the Croft family whose devoted persistence has brought about this happy result.

The word "upstart," which you use, might with fairness be applied to the Knights of Downton, who are reputed to have made a fortune as iron-masters during the Commonwealth, but it cannot be applied to the Johnes, who were one of the oldest landed families in West Wales. By judicious marriages they had increased their estates through several generations, and it was by marrying Elizabeth Knight, heiress of Croft, that the father of the "Squire of Hafod" became possessed of this estate.—HERBERT LLOYD-JOHNES, Summerleas, Monmouth.

SHEEP FROM HOLLAND

SIR,—I wonder how many of your readers with agricultural interests, and experienced in breeds of sheep, could guess the identity of the animal with the elegant profile shown in my first photograph.

There is at first glance a resemblance to the Border Leicester breed, but they do not have so much of the Roman nose that is the distinguishing feature of this patrician profile. This is in fact the head of a ram of the

East Friesland breed, a dairying breed of sheep from Holland and also found in Germany. A consignment has just been imported by a Gloucestershire farmer on to the Cotswolds, where the ewes and rams will take part in research into fat lamb production from this milky breed. Formerly they were much more widespread in Holland as the basis of a cheesemaking industry, just as the French Larzac breed is used in the production of ewe milk for Roquefort to-day.—J. L. J., Gloucestershire.

RARE MULLIONS

SIR,—I enclose a photograph of window mullions noticed when I was travelling through Somerset some while ago; they belong to the

early-17th-century manor house at Cothelstone. I was told that there is only one other example of baluster mullions to be seen, and that this is in the neighbouring county of Devon. I have since been looking for this example, yet no one whom I have so far consulted can tell me its whereabouts. Can any reader of *COUNTRY LIFE* help?—CECIL FRENCH, 26, Fairfield-avenue, Whipton, Exeter, Devon.

FOR WEIGHING LETTERS?

SIR,—I enclose a sketch of a small piece of metal apparatus in my possession. It is contained in a leather box about 4½ ins. long with ¾ in. square ends, and weighs 2 oz. The case is marked with the name of my great-grandmother and the date 1842.

When the box is pulled out, it is seen to be marked ½, 1, 2 and 3, at ever-decreasing intervals, and I can only assume it must have been used somehow as a balance for weighing—but how? The price, 9s., is marked on the case; surely quite a considerable sum 115 years ago.

I wonder if any of your readers can shed any light on what this instrument was used for.—MARGARET DENNY (Mrs.), 20, The Strand, Topham, Devon.

[We suggest that the instrument is a letter-scale. Several types were invented about the time of the introduction of the Penny Post. The stand provides the fulcrum for the steelyard, and the telescopic arm serves to balance the weight of the postal packet with the counterpoise on the fixed arm. The spring clip would hold the letter. The figures probably represent ounces.—ED.]

LETTERS IN BRIEF

Queen Victoria's Footprint.—I was interested to read Mr. Ashbourne Porter's letter (October 3) about the footprints of George IV cut in the pier at Howth, Co. Dublin. On St. Michael's Mount, Cornwall, there is the footprint of Queen Victoria in metal, to mark the place where she stepped on to the Mount. Like George IV's footprints, hers is very small; it is inscribed with the letters V.R. —TASIE LANSDOWN (Miss), Waterperry House, near Wheatley, Oxfordshire.

BALUSTER MULLIONS AT THE MANOR HOUSE, COTHELSTONE, SOMERSET

See letter: Rare Mullions

House-martins' Nesting-sites.

—Apropos of your recent correspondence about house-martins' nesting-sites, I cannot name any bridges in Sussex to which house-martins attach their nests, but an unusual site is on the south gable wall of Herstmonceux Church—not under eaves—and in clusters about the decorative stonework.—GORDON N. SLYFIELD, Horsham, Sussex.

Sea Lampreys.—May I ask your help? I am interested in the biology of the parasitical sea lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*). If any reader with knowledge of this fish will write to me, I shall be most grateful. Any letters will be acknowledged.—A. L. EVANS, Holmelands, Green-lane, Dalton-in-Furness, Lancashire.

Wild Lilies of the Valley.—I have been interested in recent correspondence on wild lilies of the valley. These grow on the Via Gellia, in Derbyshire, and gave their name to a local inn called the Lilies. Unhappily the depredations of motor-borne tourists have progressively reduced their population.—PHILIP GELL, Hopton Hall, Wirksworth, Derbyshire.

Wild lilies of the valley grow in the Yorkshire Dales in the West Riding: I have come across a fine patch in the Wharfedale area. They are also found in a copse up a tributary of the Keltney Burn in Perthshire.—L. G. W. WILKINSON, Elmwood, Moffat, Dumfriesshire.



PROFILE OF AN EAST FRIESLAND RAM RECENTLY IMPORTED TO THIS COUNTRY. (Right) A GROUP OF EAST FRIESLAND EWE LAMBS

See letter: Sheep from Holland

NEW BOOKS

NATURE RESERVES IN BRITAIN

FIFTY-SIX nature reserves, covering an area of 121,825 acres, have been declared in Britain since the Nature Conservancy, which manages many, but not all, of them on behalf of the Crown, was established under the Privy Council's auspices roughly eight years ago. Information about individual reserves, which range in size from the pocket-handkerchief Cothill Reserve in Berkshire to the 40,000-acre Cairngorms Reserve in the Scottish Highlands, has appeared in newspapers and periodicals at varying intervals, but the time was ripe for a comprehensive account of the reserves set up so far and of some of the problems involved and lessons learnt in the management of them. This is now available in *Britain's Nature Reserves*, by E. M. Nicholson, Director-General of the Nature Conservancy (COUNTRY LIFE, 30s.). No one was better fitted to compile such a guide, and Mr. Nicholson is to be congratulated on the skill with which he has compressed the maximum information into a limited space and kept the balance among the many claims to notice of the various reserves.

which are accompanied by 65 photographs, many taken from the air, include notes on where each reserve is, how big it is, what its outstanding features are, who controls it and whether access to it is restricted or not. Some reserves, such as the big Beinn Eighe Reserve in Wester Ross, can be managed as public open spaces and field laboratories at the same time; access to others, like Fyfield Down in Wiltshire or Dungeness in Kent, is subject to certain restrictions, either in order to keep a limited and characteristic area unspoiled or for the sake of the rarities found there. The positions of the various reserves are marked on a map of the British Isles, and the task of finding out to whom one should apply to visit a reserve to which access is restricted is simplified by a list of addresses of the national, local or private bodies that manage them.

ANGLING ENCYCLOPÆDIA

A MAMMOTH work in three volumes, *The Art of Angling*, edited by Kenneth Mansfield (Caxton Publishing Co., £7 12s. 6d.), has

possess most of the books about sea-fishing, but none more comprehensive or more helpful than what is contained in the 200 pages here.

Catching Coarse Fish

Volume II is confined to general fishing and deals with the fish termed coarse. The cooking of all kinds of fish is described by that expert, Ambrose Heath, and there are four most useful pages by the editor giving the arithmetical tables which fishermen from time to time may wish to consult, such as Sturdy's scale and weight-for-length calculations for salmon, and pike and other coarse fish. W. A. Adamson has two interesting articles: one is about hybrids, cross-breeds and (for the benefit of tourists) the Loch Ness monster; the other is about species of fish imported into this country, such as the huchen. Richard Walker describes the carp and the art of catching it. The fisherman with the float, the spinner with his spoon, or the chef with his saucepan will find here the solution to his problem.

So to the last volume, which to many of us is the most important,

and perch to be caught in Scotland. Happily the editor forgets neither char nor the schelly, nor the old "whitefish" of the *Salmonidae*, the king of them himself. R. B.

ASPECTS OF GARDENING

ALTHOUGH *Soft Fruits*, by K. Genders (Hart-Davis, 11s. 6d.) with its advice on marketing and requirements of frozen and can-food and fruit-juice manufacture tends to emphasise the commercial side of gardening, it remains a valuable guide, the only one covering the subject, for the ordinary gardener. Cultural details are adequate and critical lists of recommended varieties admirable. Unfortunately there is almost complete lack of illustration.

Originally published in 1930, *Amateur's Greenhouse*, by the late A. J. Macself, has now been revised for the fourth edition by A. G. Hellyer (Collingridge, 21s.). It remains to-day the best general book on greenhouses, with details of types of house, their construction, heating and management, a detailed list of plants at shorter chapters on specialised groups such as bulbs, annuals, fruit and cacti. It is well illustrated and, now completely up to date on methods of heating and pest and disease control, should serve another generation of greenhouse owners as well as ever.

Garden Design from America

Taylor's Garden Guide, by Norman Taylor (Van Nostrand; distributed in Britain by Macmillan, 45s.), is an American volume on general gardening with the emphasis on planning and on special effects of various kinds. Like most such books from the United States, the special conditions of climate there, and all the different kinds of plant available, make it at some points useless for the British gardener. Nevertheless, it has many good ideas, and the results shown in the photographic illustrations are admirable, so that anyone particularly interested in garden design should find its differing viewpoint stimulating.

Another American book is *Plant Propagation in Pictures*, by Montagu Free (Museum Press, 32s. 6d.). This is a technical book in the modern manner with hundreds of illustrations, mainly photographic, in series showing exactly how to sow seeds, take cuttings, bud a rose or layer a shrub. The lay-out is a little clumsy in places but most of the pictures are excellent and instructive. The propagation of a wide range of plants is demonstrated. Some of the techniques are unorthodox, such as that of budding a rose on to an unrooted cutting, which is best struck in a close frame and, if one is to believe the pictures, may flower the following summer. This is a useful book on one of the perennially fascinating aspects of gardening.

Arranging Flowers

The spreading popularity of floral art is evinced by the publication by Penguin Books of *Flower Arrangement*, by Betty Massingham (6s.). This is just another book on a subject at which many well known ladies have already tilted. The book seems well balanced, with almost a scientific approach, and covers every aspect of the subject while concentrating on keeping everything simple. Particularly useful are lists of plants suitable for various special purposes, and some analytical line drawings. There are some 42 line drawings.

Last, a fourth, much enlarged edition of the admirable *Gardening in East Africa*, edited by A. J. Jex-Blake (Longmans, 45s.), originally published by the Kenya Horticultural Society in 1934. The text, by 23 East African gardeners, covers an amazing range of plants which can be grown in this astonishing climate. There are 200 coloured plates of some 53 plants; not altogether an improvement on the older plates, which showed a wider range of flowers, though they are excellent. A. J. H.



A PEATY LOCHAN IN THE NATURAL FOREST OF SCOTCH PINE IN THE CAIRNGORMS NATURE RESERVE. An illustration in *Britain's Nature Reserves*, reviewed on this page

In his introduction, Mr. Nicholson, before mentioning the part played by the Conservancy in the establishment and control of these reserves, pays due tribute to the private bodies, such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Norfolk Naturalists' Trust, whose enterprise and foresight enabled specific areas to be set aside for the preservation of nature at a time when a national body charged with this task was merely a dream. In those early days a nature reserve was looked upon as a sanctuary, a place where birds and other creatures could be safe from molestation. To-day it is regarded not merely as a living museum for the preservation of plants and animals and their different habitats but as an out-of-doors laboratory where ecological and other problems of natural history can be studied. Experience, Mr. Nicholson points out, has already shown that a nature reserve is a changing, not a static, thing in which a nice balance among its various elements must be maintained if the purposes for which it was established are not to be frustrated.

The different kinds and degrees of nature reserves so far set up are apparent from the detailed descriptions of the chief reserves, and the brief accounts of others, that make up this useful book. The descriptions,

contributions on every subject that concerns the fisherman. Many of the writers are well known to the student of angling literature. The work is profusely illustrated by photographs, diagrams, maps, line drawings and the attractive head and tail pieces of H. G. C. Claypoole; it succeeds when such a vast undertaking might be expected to fail because of the magnitude of the field it sets out to cover.

The first volume deals with fishing from the earliest times, angling literature (two excellent chapters by the editor) and general treatises on fishing in the British Isles. These are followed, wisely, by an introduction to the tackle required, which leads up to some excellent writing by C. F. Walker about fly-dressing and many helpful suggestions by L. Vernon Bates concerning the making of tackle. The rest of this volume is confined to a comprehensive survey of salt-water fish and how to catch them either from a boat or from the shore. A reference to this section will solve the problems of anyone contemplating a holiday on the coasts of these islands; for if he takes a rod with him the information supplied by Messrs. Jackman, Kelley, Garrad, Claypoole and Horsfall Turner and Brigadier Caunter will tell him how best to use it, whether his quarry is the humble flounder or cuddy, the princely tope, or the mighty tunny. I

because it deals with the *Salmonidae* and the means of catching them in flowing or still waters. It ends with some intelligent observations by Peter Michael in three chapters with the titles *How Science aids the Angler*, *The Fish and its Environment* and *Fish Biology*, which every novice should study before he puts line to water. Arthur Went writes a dissertation on scale reading, Raymond Perrett a contribution on fish ponds and the editor a short note on the law which concerns fishermen and a final word about the spectre which hangs over nearly all our rivers—pollution.

Salmon and Sea-Trout Fishing

Coombe Richards and C. F. Walker respectively give adequate attention to salmon and sea-trout fishing, and the pleasures and problems of a chalk stream. They are assisted by T. C. Ivens, who describes "river trout with the sunken fly."

These writers are backed up by T. K. Wilson, E. Powell (who supplies a splendid and desirable addition on fishing the dry fly in rain-fed rivers as opposed to the chalk streams), Horsfall Turner, who treats the grayling rather too much from a Yorkshireman's point of view, a failing for which he apologises, and W. A. Adamson, who, in writing of loch fishing, is not unmindful of the pike

EDINBURGH WEAVERS

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MOTORING NOTES

AFTERTHOUGHTS ON THE SHOW

By J. EASON GIBSON

ONE must agree that the interest taken by the general public in the annual Exhibition at Earls Court more than justifies its continuance, even though there are sections of the industry which consider that it is losing its value.

In spite of the great amount of publicity given to the so-called bubble cars, little effective interest seems to have been taken in them by the buying public. It was the general impression that, while every visitor to the Show examined them with care, in many cases their interest was on the level of amusement. I heard many visitors remark after inspecting one of the miniature cars designed for ultra-economy motoring that they would rather buy a second-hand version of such established British cars as the Morris Minor, Austin A35, Standard Eight or Ford Anglia.

I gained the impression that the lack of effective interest in these miniature cars—by effective interest I mean firmly-placed orders—

Although the Berkeley had been in successful production for some time before the Show, for many motorists it was the first opportunity to see this interesting newcomer. A new model of the Berkeley was also exhibited, with a specially designed and built three-cylinder Excelsior engine instead of the already used twin-cylinder engine. Not only will the three-cylinder unit give extra power and performance, but greater smoothness will be obtained, and the makers claim that little increase in fuel consumption will be experienced.

A last-minute surprise at the Show was the Lotus Elite; I gather that even its manufacturers were surprised that it was made ready in time for exhibition. Although unlikely to interest the average motorist, this new model is of great interest, as evidence of the increasing interest in cars made principally of materials other than metal. The builders of the Lotus

and as a result there is no need for riveting. While there are several other cars employing resin-bonded glass construction, the new Lotus Elite is unusual for the almost complete elimination of metal reinforcement. Strictly speaking metal is used only as the most convenient means of spreading the stresses over a large area. The attachment points for the various components are welded to large steel plates which are themselves bonded into the mouldings. The only metal used in the basic structure consists of a steel tube bonded into the glass fibre which has the effect of holding together as one structure the lower body sills, the scuttle and the roof. Jacking points are provided by the lower ends of this steel tube.

With this method of construction it is easy to provide carrying space within the mouldings; it is no surprise to find that the fuel tanks are contained within the front wings. This will have the advantage that the weight distribution between front and rear wheels will not vary



THE LOTUS ELITE COUPE. It has clean and functional bodywork

was almost entirely due to their impracticability for general motoring purposes by the average British motorist. Most British drivers, especially those who have to pay attention to running costs, are agreed that certain minima are essential. The truth is that the very limited accommodation and the difficulty of getting in and out makes them unsuitable for the tastes of the British driver, who has become accustomed over the years to four doors, four seats and reasonably good accommodation for luggage. I have the feeling that many of these ultra-small cars will fail on the British market because their designers have tried to achieve too much in a limited space.

One miniature which deserves to succeed is the little Berkeley. Its manufacturers have, I think, wisely resisted the temptation to attempt the construction of a family saloon within limited overall dimensions. Instead they have built a miniature sports car, designed to give a performance in proportion to its size. This car uses an interesting pontoon-like basic structure on which the simple sports-type two-seater body is fitted, and the whole is largely made of one of the glass-reinforced polyester resin materials.

This method of construction saves appreciable weight, and allows the simple two-cylinder motor-cycle type of engine to propel the car at a speed of over 60 m.p.h., with a fuel consumption of between 50 and 60 m.p.g. This car's likely success will be due in large measure to its makers' acceptance of the fact that it is impossible to build a proper four-seater saloon car without its overall dimensions being equal to those of the many cars already in production.

have so far confined their attention to the construction of sports and sports/racing cars and, as this new model is a two-seater fixed-head coupé, it requires little forethought to see that it will sell principally to those interested in competition work. The previous sports models from Lotus have used either the 1,100 c.c. or the 1,500 c.c. Coventry-Climax engine, itself developed from the war-time water pump engine, and this new model employs the same make of engine, modified to give a capacity of 1,216 c.c. This capacity will allow the car to be entered in accordance with Appendix J of the International Sporting Commission in the class up to 1,300 c.c. Following on the many successes of Lotus in sports car events, one can expect a serious attack on the events confined to Gran Turismo cars. While the car is eligible for that category, there are many who consider that for a car to qualify as Gran Turismo, it should be possible to use it for touring in de luxe style. As the Lotus has only a limited space for carrying luggage, it might not be considered eligible.

The importance of this new car lies in the method of construction. The low overall weight of 10½ cwt. has been achieved by the use of resin-bonded glass for the construction of both chassis and body assembly, which are built from separate mouldings. The three principal sections are a large front unit, a moulding consisting of the roof and rear portion of the body and a floor section. Each of these sections is fabricated from many separate mouldings, made in polyester resin, which are then joined together by means of an adhesive of epoxide resin. This makes a complete bond between the joints,

as it would were the total fuel load carried behind the rear wheels. As the 1,216 c.c. engine gives a power of 71 b.h.p.—admittedly at the high engine speed of 6,700 r.p.m.—the performance will obviously be of a very high order indeed.

It is only to be expected that, at least initially, such an advanced car should be expensive; the price, including purchase tax, is quoted as £1,951. It may be some time before this new Lotus can be regarded as a true production car, as the manufacturers will be the first to appreciate that considerable development work may be necessary before the car can be sold with confidence. It is indicative that this very original design should have been evolved by such a young and small firm. One cannot help feeling that many of the large factories would have gained by the stimulus of such a daring mental exercise.

In previous articles I have questioned the practicability of many of the brighter and gayer, not to say shocking, colours being used on bodywork, and I found it interesting during the Show to eavesdrop on the comments of motorists. Although the largest crowds were certainly found around the most glamorously coloured cars, the comments of most visitors were no flattery to the manufacturers' taste. According to friends in the retail motor trade the remarks I overheard are supported by the choice of colours by most motorists when they place their orders. It seems that only a small proportion specify such pronounced colours as are listed by certain manufacturers; this is, perhaps, just as well, as I have seen colours listed under the names of Arctic glow and Tahiti bronze.

CAUSERIE ON BRIDGE

CLIMAX

By M. HARRISON-GRAY

THE multiple teams-of-four contest is a form of duplicate that is calculated to test the stoutest nerves. Twenty-nine teams recently competed for the Fox-Shammon Cup; each team played two boards against each of the others. It is astonishing what can happen during one of these miniature matches.

Tension reaches a peak when two teams are the running meet towards the end of the contest. It is easier to depict such a drama from a personal standpoint. Miss Shanahan's team (Sharples, R. Sharples and I) were in tears to the teams captained by Leslie Dodds and Dr. Sidney Lee, but it seemed at the gap might have closed after we had played the two hands below against another strong team. The first was:

♠ K J 9 7 2
♥ Q Q J 10 7
♦ ...
♣ 9 8 5

♠ A 6
♥ 8 2
♦ A 8 7 5 3
♣ A K J 4

N
W E
S

♠ 10 8 5 4
♥ 9 6 5
♦ K 9 4
♣ Q 6 2

Dealer, South. Neither side vulnerable.

At one table the Sharples reached a normal Five Diamonds on the East-West cards. In the replay Miss Shanahan (North) and partner bid a lot of bidding," to use a popular phrase, and their opponents decided that Four Diamonds was the limit. The second hand was:

♠ A 10 7 6 2
♥ Q 10 4
♦ 7 2
♣ A Q J

♠ J 9 5
♥ J
♦ A K 9 8 5
♣ 10 6 5 2

N
W E
S

♠ Q 3
♥ A 9 5 3 2
♦ J 4 3
♣ K 7 3

Dealer, West. North-South vulnerable.

The rival North-South pair went one down in Four Hearts, but my partner and I managed to stop in Three Hearts for a plus score. Our team thus picked up eight match points on two innocuous-looking deals, little guessing that the Dodds team would be in dire peril when they played these same two boards.

The first was played in Five Diamonds by the opposing East-West pair, but Dodds (West) and Kenneth Konstam bid and made six Diamonds at the other table, with Truscott and Mrs. van Rees sitting North and South.

As East-West were the first to agree, this is a pretty unspeakable slam call. It requires not only a Diamond finesse and a Club finesse; the Clubs must break kindly to allow a Spade discard in dummy. Now comes an interesting aspect of tournament play.

Certain players, far from being deflated, have a rare knack of cancelling out a reverse of this nature. When they came to play the second board, Truscott and Mrs. van Rees started with One Spade—Two Hearts—Three Hearts. South would normally let it go at that, having exhausted her values with a response at the Two level, but she went on to game.

The King of Diamonds was led and East, anxious to protect his King of Hearts, encouraged with the Ten. A third round of the suit was ruffed low in dummy. The Queen of Hearts followed, East playing the Six and West the Knave; the Ten was covered by the King, and all of a sudden the hand became a thing of real beauty. Can South avoid the loss of a Spade, as well as a trump trick and the two Diamonds? Marjorie van Rees spotted her only chance: draw a third round of trumps with the Nine, cash three Clubs, and lead a Heart to East's Eight. She guessed right on the forced Spade return and played the Queen to land a hopeless-looking contract.

Had you watched the replay of this board at the other table you would have thought "This is going to be a case of virtue rewarded." Boris Schapiro (North) and Mrs. Fleming started as before with no apparent reason to press, but South then bid Four Hearts and soon had cause to regret her enterprise. When three rounds of Diamonds were played, South misread the situation and ruffed with dummy's Ten of Hearts; now, as you will see, East can cover the Queen and come to two tricks in trumps.

Unfortunately for the Truscott team (and, indirectly, for our own), East had a momentary black-out and declined to cover the Queen of Hearts. Mrs. Fleming recovered smartly by end-playing East, and Dodd's team emerged from these adventures exchanges with a net gain of six match points. Then, right at the end, came the encounter between Dodds and Miss Shanahan, both teams being well aware that one good swing would probably decide the destination of the cup. On the first board, a part-score affair, we picked up three match points. The second hand was:

♠ J 10 8 7 6 4 2
♥ J 8 5
♦ K Q 3
♣ ...

♠ 5 3
♥ A K 7 6 2
♦ 8 7 4
♣ Q J 6

N
W E
S

♠ K 9
♥ Q 10 3
♦ A J 5 2
♣ 9 7 5 3

Dealer, East. North-South vulnerable.

The Sharples brothers were granted a clear run and East played in Three No-Trumps, just made. No one anticipated a different result at the other table, but there the gallery got its money's worth. It is a story against myself in a unique setting, with all four players contributing to a bout of brilliant bidding.

Dodds was now sitting East, on my right, and the auction started thus:

South	West	North	East
No bid	1 Heart	1 Spade	1 Club
2 Spades	3 Clubs	3 Spades	1 No-Trump
Double	No bid	4 Spades	3 No-Trumps

The par on the hand is unusual—the vulnerable side must sacrifice at a cost of 200 to prevent East-West from scoring 400 in Three No-Trumps. It was no mean achievement to bid up to Four Spades with cards on which North-South had not made a single bid at the first table; it was unlucky for us that Dodds, of all people, should be East.

I ask you; how many players could resist doubling Four Spades?

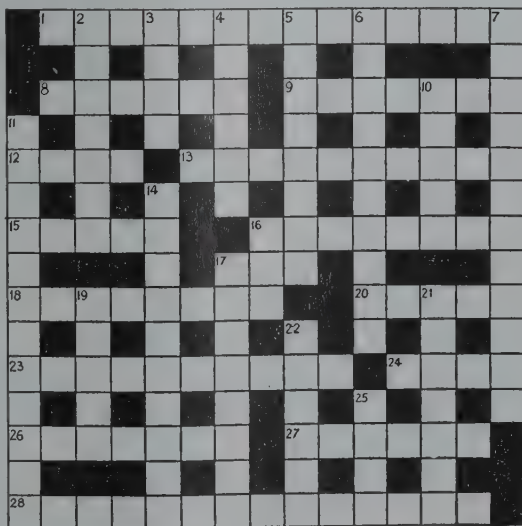
Somehow Leslie formed a picture of the set-up. Could he count on West for two quick tricks on the bidding? (Only the fact that he had the Ace-King of Hearts would enable the Queen of Spades to win the setting trick.) And so, in spite of South's previous double, East calmly bid Four No-Trumps. He had no hope of making it, but it seemed cheaper to go one down doubled in Four No-Trumps than two down doubled in Five Clubs.

The unfortunate South could pick up these thought waves. East was banking on his Clubs, but he couldn't have more than six of them; the only remote combination that could give him ten tricks was the Ace-Queen of Spades and Ace-King of Hearts. I put my finger on a Diamond and kept it there for a full two minutes; but how could I face my teammates if I thereby presented East with his tenth trick? I couldn't get away from the original point: if he held the Ace and Queen of Spades, how could he fail to double his vulnerable opponents?

So the King of Spades was led, and East spread his hand to cut short the agony. A Diamond lead would have won us the cup, but I can't say I felt bitter. Some flights of fancy deserve to succeed.

CROSSWORD No. 1447

COUNTRY LIFE books to the value of 8 guineas will be awarded for the first correct solution opened. Solutions (in a closed envelope) must reach "Crossword No. 1447, COUNTRY LIFE, 2-10, Tavistock-street, Covent Garden, London, W.C.2," not later than the first post on the morning of Wednesday, November 6, 1957.



Name.....
(MR. MRS. ETC.)

Address.....

SOLUTION TO No. 1446. The winner of this Crossword, the clues of which appeared in the issue of October 24, will be announced next week.

ACROSS.—1, Counterblast; 9, Dear money; 10, Olave; 11, Cheers; 12, Stipples; 13, Lassie; 15, Pen-cases; 18, Filberts; 19, Spares; 21, Ringlets; 23, Silene; 26, Items; 27, Outsoared; 28, Cross-bencher. DOWN.—1, Codicil; 2, Ukase; 3, Temeraire; 4, Ring; 5, Lavettes; 6, Stoop; 7, Presses; 8, Palliser; 14, Splinter; 16, Capricorn; 17, Stations; 18, Forties; 20, Slender; 22, Loser; 24, Earth; 25, Stab.

ACROSS

1. A sailor, however seasoned, would hardly be so described (4, 2, 3, 5)
8. Monstrous encumbrance (6)
9. Miracle to recover (7)
12. Look for it in a level bed (4)
13. They have something else to do in peace-time presumably (10)
15. Double this and make nonsense of it (5)
16. Spicy (8)
17. One in an unfriendly palace (3)
18. Lives not otherwise but in imagination? (8)
20. George Eliot (2, 3)
23. Detached smell, perhaps, to give an imprecise meaning (5, 5)
24. "And quoted—, and jewels five-words long" —Tennyson (4)
26. Lonely perhaps and sometimes moated (7)
27. A capital town to pick! (6)
28. Place providing a cask for crossing the river to the cathedral (9, 5)

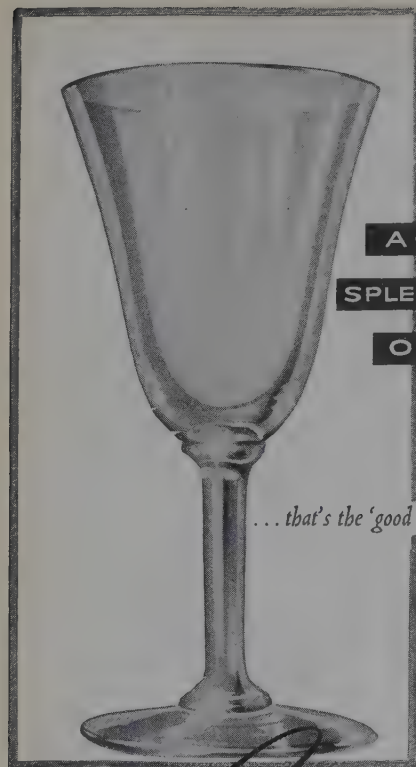
DOWN

2. Could his turn be to a crab? (7)
3. A got up garment (4)
4. You might expect to meet one in Cambridge-shire (6)
5. Soft goods? Quite the contrary (8)
6. Ten campers (anagr.) (10)
7. Common complaint of exiles (12)
10. The sort of person who gets everything taped (5)
11. No will-of-the-wisp, it appears (7, 5)
14. He hopes to be champion (10)
16. "Thyself shalt see the —" —Shakespeare (3)
17. In figures, no doubt, but Latin to those without much intelligence (8)
19. The flower of Twelfth Night (5)
21. Dirt-cheap to build? (3, 4)
22. Where wood and metal combine (6)
25. Little Highlander (4)

NOTE.—This Competition does not apply to the United States.

The winner of Crossword No. 1445 is

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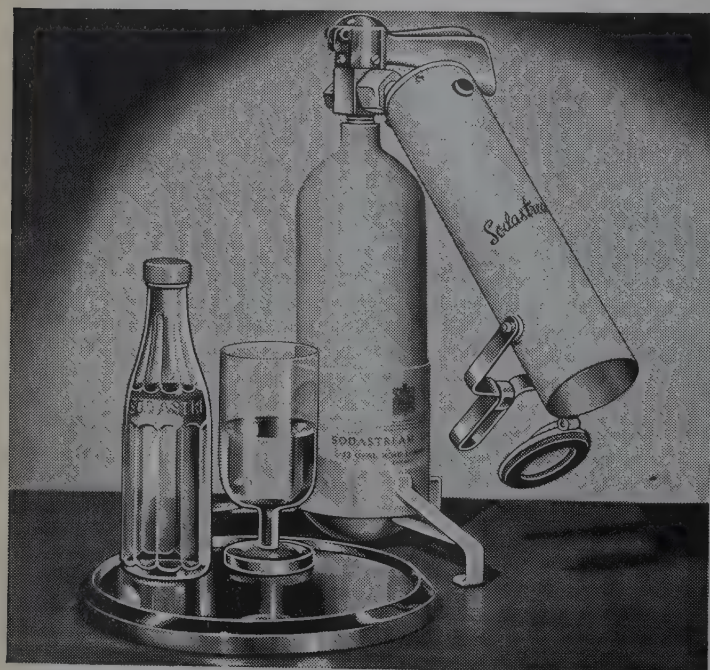
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E ESTATE MARKET

RENTS AND REPAIRS

FROM time to time in these notes I have commented on the disparity that exists between farm and costs of repairs and maintenance, and I was interested to read the 50th annual report of the City Landowners' Association that, though statistics show that rents are tending to move slowly upwards, there is still a gap between the average awarded by tribunals and the average figure obtained for new agreements, whether by agreement or by arbitration.

DEFINITION WANTED

WHEN considering amendments to the Agricultural Holdings Act, 1948, the Association have always been in the view that if farm rents were realistic, many of the landowner's difficulties in regard to the tenure of farms would be solved and the "equitable return" on capital referred to in Part I of the Agriculture Act, 1947, could be achieved. They are also of the opinion that some definition of "rent properly payable" should be laid down for the guidance of arbitrators in the event of dispute, and their recommendation is that it be defined as the rent which a tenant might reasonably be expected to offer and a landlord to accept on an open-market basis, but excluding any element of premium in the tenant's offer.

PROMPT ATTENTION TO DEFECTS

LANDLORDS are not the only members of the agricultural industry who are pressed for money these days. Working farmers and owner-occupiers are also feeling the draught, and most of them are finding it necessary to economise. The problem is where and how to effect the economies, and finding himself in this predicament a sensible man will examine his budget for repairs and maintenance, where he is likely to find that a considerable saving can be effected by exercising a little care and forethought.

For example, in his book, *Estate Management for the Farmer*, published some years ago, Mr. R. R. Ware, who at that time was Director of the Agricultural Land Service, stresses the importance of attending promptly to all defects. By so doing, he writes, a farmer will not only do much to avoid constant visits from builders and plumbers, but will also save his pocket by achieving greater efficiency in the work of the farm, "since if men are trained to use equipment properly and with respect, they do not have to waste time in Heath Robinson improvisation. Instead, they learn to expect things to work and see that they do."

Mr. Ware points out that there are usually slack times on a farm, especially in bad weather, when it is possible to do small maintenance jobs without other work suffering. For example, the damaged wall of a yard can often be patched temporarily but quite effectively by fixing wooden shuttering round the damaged part and pouring in concrete. And although outdoor work with concrete can be done only in good weather, time can be saved by preparing the shuttering in advance.

IMPORTANCE OF A WORKSHOP

ENLARGING his theme, Mr. Ware stresses the need of a workshop, where tools should be kept tidily and in good shape. A ladder capable of reaching to the highest roof of the farm buildings is, in his view, a necessity, for without one it is impossible to clear eaves, gutters or gulleys when they are choked with silt or dead leaves. Then, again, sliding doors that become jammed will soon be damaged, and in this case a scrape here or a touch of oil there may help to keep down the cost of repairs.

"A farmer," says Mr. Ware, "should insist on his men reporting at once anything that goes wrong." He must always be on his guard against damp, dry rot, fire and vermin. For instance, a slipped slate, if not replaced, may cause rot in a roof timber; a choked drain-pipe may cause serious damage to a brick wall; and rats and mice can cause faults in electric wiring which may lead to fire.

In addition to these precautions, Mr. Ware stresses the need of a periodic overhaul by experts, and these, he suggests, should take place every three or four years with the object of detecting defects before they give trouble and having them all put right together.

HAMPSHIRE ESTATE FOR SALE

AS the unsettled economic situation had resulted in fewer sales than usual this autumn, a number of intending sellers, leading estate agents tell me, have taken properties off the market in the hope that conditions will improve. In fact, in some cases plans are already being laid for the spring, and one estate that is scheduled for auction early next year, if not sold privately beforehand, is Hoplands, which extends to roughly 755 acres at Kings Somborne, between Stockbridge and Winchester, Hampshire. The estate is offered by Messrs. Strutt and Parker, Lofts and Warner, acting for Mrs. Christopher Firbank, and it includes a corn, beef and dairy farm of approximately 430 acres, 280 acres of woods and rough land, both with possession, and 43 acres of let farm land. The principal house is modern and compact, and there are six modernised cottages and a useful range of farm buildings.

In the letter that refers to the offer of Hoplands, Messrs. Strutt and Parker, Lofts and Warner state that their urban department, acting with Messrs. White, Druce and Brown, have sold to an insurance company the freehold ground rent amounting to £3,500 a year secured on No. 61, Webber-street, and Nos. 24-28, Rushworth-street, Southwark, London, S.E.1. The premises are occupied by the Decca Record Company.

LATE LORD INVERNAIN'S SCOTTISH HOME

FELICITY, Scottish home of the late Lord Invernain, which is situated in Strathnairn, about 12 miles from Inverness, was sold under the hammer by Messrs. Knight, Frank and Rutley to Mrs. B. W. McLennan, formerly of Aberdeen, for £10,000. The sale included the policies, a secondary house, the well-known Felicity Inn, an agricultural holding, and fishings in the River Nairn and near-by lochs. The surrounding estate of nearly 5,000 acres, including a home farm with hill lands and a grouse moor running to about 3,400 acres, was also offered, but was withdrawn as the reserve price was not reached.

INCREASED TIMBER SALES

SALES of timber are on the increase, and during the course of the next few months Messrs. Jackson-Stops and Staff will be offering more than half a million cub. ft. of standing and felled mixed hardwood and softwood made up of numerous parcels of oak, ash, elm, beech, sycamore, Spanish chestnut, larch and spruce, on estates in various parts of the country. By the time these notes appear, they will have submitted 57,907 cub. ft. of oak and beech in Saverlake Forest by order of the Forestry Commissioners, and next month they will be offering large parcels on the Wressle estate near Selby in the East Riding, and on the Claverton and Warleigh estates near Bath, Somerset. PROCURATOR.

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SIR ERNEST THYNNE built Corsley Manor in 1545. It is typical of its times and not surprisingly boasts connections with that Elizabethan adventurer, Sir Walter Raleigh.

Mr. R. R. Jones is its present owner and the farmer of its intensively cultivated 500 acres. His is a good example of a mixed farm. A pedigree herd of Attested Dairy Shorthorns is kept in three separate dairies. There is also a herd of pedigree Wessex Saddleback Pigs, whilst poultry

are raised on the deep litter system. Various cereals and root crops are grown.

To help him, Mr. Jones employs three diesel tractors, two V.O. tractors and two lorries. All use fuels supplied through the Shell and BP Farm Service.

The quality of these fine fuels is by no means the only reason for their popularity. Another is the supply system, which makes use of carefully chosen Authorised Distributors throughout Great Britain.

But there is more to the Shell and BP Farm Service than this. A technical advisory service is to be found at all the major Agricultural Shows. You are probably familiar with the Shell and BP stands at these events. Films on a wide variety of subjects – but all aimed at promoting better husbandry – are shown to countrymen in all parts. The Farm Service actively helps the Association of Agriculturalists which is devoted to improving the understanding between Town and Country.

FARMING NOTES

CONFIDENCE IN BEEF

WHEN feeders are willing to pay £50 a head for suckled calves no more than eight months old they must have a fair measure of confidence in the future of the beef market. A neighbour who ended several of the calf sales in Border country and the north of Scotland tells me that prices have run £12 above last year's averages and suckled calves were not particularly cheap then. There is a bigger margin in ever between steer calves and heifer calves; the steers are more popular because heifers have a greater propensity to put on internal fat and are at a discount with the butchers and the public. Here we see consumer preference running back to the feeder's prices. He cannot determine the sex of the calves born in his herd, but he can go for the types that will finish readily at an early age. Examine the Ministry of Agriculture's market returns and it will be found that heifers are finished at lighter weights than steers. They give the feeder a slightly bigger return but a smaller cheque, and if he has plenty of summer grazing he would rather have the extra weight and the extra money. The good trade for suckled calves that have had the full benefit of their mother's milk stresses the importance of quality home production. With industrial meat in Argentina there are doubts about the continuity of the supply of killed beef and a butcher friend tells me that the quality has not been so uniformly good in recent months.

Eggs Fancied

NO marked is the housewife's preference for large eggs that grocers are able to sell them at 5s. 3d. a dozen compared with 3s. a dozen for the medium grade. These large eggs are graded to 2½ oz. as the minimum weight, and the medium grade are between 1½ oz. and 1¾ oz. The standard grade comes between. Weight for weight there is not the extra value in the large egg, but a grocer tells me that his customers believe that the big eggs are the best eggs. I know of no nutritional basis for this assumption and I doubt whether there is any more than the belief that eggs with brown shells are better than eggs with white shells. But we must try to provide what housewives want. Their preference is reflected clearly enough in the prices which the packing stations pay for the different weight grades. I suspect that the development of hybrid strains of poultry which produce extra eggs is resulting in smaller eggs. Egg size is no less important than egg numbers and it may indeed become more important. When I am ordering day-old chicks for next season I shall want some assurance that the stock will produce a fair proportion of big eggs.

Farm-workers' Bonuses

INCREASED mechanisation calls for increased skill and responsibility on the part of the farm-worker. With all the competition coming from the towns enough skilled men are to be attracted to farm-work in the future their rewards, status and opportunities and their living and working conditions must be the subject of understanding attention. Taking this as a basic consideration, Mr. Richard Bennett, lecturer in estate management at the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, makes some useful suggestions in *The Farm Worker*. Conservative Political Centre, 2, Victoria-street, London, S.W.1, price 6d. With a standard minimum wage for a given number of working hours many a man must ask himself why he should work harder than the next man. Bonus payments are the most

usual form of incentive and with the rearing of livestock they are quite simple to work, that is so much for every pig weaned or calf reared. Piece-work, which is widely practised in urban industry, is applied in only a few agricultural instances, such as singling sugar-beet and lifting potatoes.

Annual Increments?

IT is not easy to run profit-sharing schemes because no matter how well all the work is done there may be a financial loss due to factors outside the control of the staff, whether it is a broken harvest or disease in crops or livestock. Mr. Bennett suggests that some improvement might be made in the terms of employment by the offer of an annual increment. It would be up to each farmer to work out his own scheme. Any such scheme would no doubt attract the more progressive labour to the more progressive farmer. Qualified workers might receive an increase in wages of say 5s. a week for each year worked on that particular farm, subject to a minimum. In practice farmers do give extra rewards to the experienced hand because they have made themselves most valuable, if not irreplaceable, in the business of the farm. Mr. Bennett does not suggest that such increments should be laid down by the Wages Board.

Farm Incomes

A SURVEY of farm incomes in England and Wales made by the National Farmers' Union shows that during the year ended March, 1956, incomes fell on livestock and dairying holdings and improved on arable farms compared with the previous year. Incomes on dairy farms fell by about 5 per cent., although both milk sales and the prices paid to producers were higher than in 1954-55. The poorer rate of profit was due to the continued rise in production costs rather than heavier purchases of winter feeding-stuffs. But the 1955 harvest was good for cereals. The N.F.U. notes that the introduction of heavier yielding varieties, the virtual elimination of rabbits and the higher return from potatoes associated with the shorter crop in a dry season all contributed to the improvement. The trends shown by these figures are interesting. The figures would be more valuable if they were brought more nearly up-to-date.

Land out of Use

AMERICAN farmers could produce much more food than they are doing by applying the methods of crop production ordinarily used in this country, for instance the application of nitrogenous fertilisers, which in Britain earns a government subsidy. In the United States the purpose of the soil conservation policy and the encouragement of better rotations, water conservation and measures to control erosion was to reduce immediate production, help the price situation and build up fertility. In practice the soil conservation practices, which we recognise as good husbandry, have resulted in American crop yields being boosted. Some land has been taken out of cultivation, but in the main heavier crops are being grown, and the problem of crop surpluses has not been solved. All this is discussed with close knowledge by Lauren Soth in *Farm Trouble* (Princeton University Press: London Oxford University Press, 30s.). He considers that soil conservation policy has worked in the broad national interest, but ways will have to be found of reducing the pressure towards greater output. In this genuine conservation—holding land out of full use—has a part to play.

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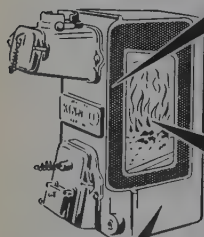
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NEW BOOKS

DODGING BRUTALITY
AT BOTANY BAY

Reviews by HOWARD SPRING

FEW people, I imagine, have heard of Sir Henry Brown Hayes, who was an Irish baronet; but it chances that he appears in two books I have been reading this week: *John Grant's Journey*, by W. S. Hill-Reid (Heinemann, 21s.) and *Till I End My Song*, by Robert Gibbings (Dent, 25s.). One of Mr. Gibbings's ancestors comes into the story, so let him tell it. He says that between 1 and 2 o'clock on a summer morning in 1797, "Miss Mary Pike, a wealthy Quaker heiress, then staying with friends a few miles from the city of Cork, was handed a note from her family physician, my antecedent and namesake Dr. Robert

by soldiers so lost to propriety that the Governor appointed by the King had to watch his step with them: such a community was not likely to be tender-minded to a defenceless convict. But there was another side to the question, and the value of Mr. Hill-Reid's book is in the clarity with which this side is brought out. I refer to the way in which a convict, if he had good manners, some education and a pleasing appearance, could side-step the brutality prevalent all round him. That is, if he accepted it, fitted himself into the pattern, and kept his mouth shut. But that was something Grant was never prepared to do. He

JOHN GRANT'S JOURNEY. By W. S. Hill-Reid
(Heinemann, 21s.)

TILL I END MY SONG. By Robert Gibbings
(Dent, 25s.)

No. 10 DOWNING STREET, 1660-1900. By Hector Bolitho
(Hutchinson, 25s.)

SHARKS AND LITTLE FISH. By Wolfgang Ott
(Hutchinson 15s.)

Gibbings, saying that her mother was ill and needed her presence."

The note was a forgery, but it served its purpose and got Miss Pike on to the high road where a masked highwayman seized her. This was Sir Henry Brown Hayes, who took her to his house and at pistol-point forced her through a bogus marriage service, though the parson was as bogus as everything else in this odd episode. Sir Henry was sentenced to death, but this was commuted and he went to Botany Bay, to be a thorn in the side of authority and an evil influence in the life of John Grant, whose tale is told by Mr. Hill-Reid.

SHOOTING AN HEIRESS'S
GUARDIAN

There was a lawyer named Townsend concerned in the Brown Hayes case; and a lawyer named Townsend was responsible for Grant's joining the baronet in Australian exile. Or rather it was Grant's hatred of Townsend that cooked his goose. Again, an heiress was involved, a Miss Ward, who, though engaged to be married to a soldier serving abroad, did not discourage Grant's advances. Grant was no catch for an heiress. He was a youth of middle-class family who had succeeded in going bankrupt, and no one can wonder that Mr. Townsend, her guardian, didn't look favourably upon Grant's advances. He declined Grant's invitation to a duel, and thereupon, as the lawyer was walking one spring evening in St. James's-place, Grant peppered his backside with swanshot. Like the baronet whose acquaintance he was soon to make, he was sentenced to death, but was permitted the joys of Botany Bay instead.

The gruelling labour, the chains and the floggings that could befall a man in that part of the world have been dealt with in fiction and in memoirs so extensively that we know all about it. The lawless community in which rum was currency, dominated

protested because it was in his nature to protest against injustice and cruelty wherever he found it, and he protested the more emphatically once he had met Sir Henry Brown Hayes, a born trouble-maker.

Grant was a young man of good appearance, well educated, who, when packing up to go abroad as a convict, noted with satisfaction his "black satten waistcoat and breeches," his expensive shirts, and the white hat, "also handsome." He took with him his violin and harpsichord, and, while other poor wretches were being flogged aboard, he was admitted to the privileges of the captain's quarters. He carried with him letters of introduction to influential people, and it seemed natural, when he landed, that he should call upon the Judge-Advocate. One of his letters of introduction was from a previous governor, Hunter.

GENTLEMAN'S LIFE AMONG
THE CONVICTS

Sir Henry Brown Hayes had arrived earlier. He was to suffer pangs, too; but here is a picture of how a convict, working out his sentence, could live till the authorities caught up with him, and could have gone on living had he given the authorities no reason for alarm. "Since Grant's departure, the mansion house had been completed, and the lonely, picturesque estate, its wide green fields grazing its priceless cattle, its paths and woods, and the little private sailing-craft idly snubbing at its moorings formed a picture of domestic serenity unrivalled in the colony at that time."

The fact seems to have been that those who had known English society, and for one reason or another had left it or been thrust out of it, were prepared to look with the utmost leniency upon newcomers who brought to the crude life of the colony some refreshment from the source they themselves longingly remembered. But this leniency would come to an



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REVIEWS by HOWARD SPRING—continued

pt end if the newcomers did not
pt the harsh reality of colonial life.
reality was the whip, the gun and
gibbet, until the great Macquarie
ved to lay the first stones for a new
s of society. Surely Mr. Hill-Reid
ght when he says that if Macquarie
governed the colony from the
nning, "characters such as Grant
Hayes—men of education and
ity—might have become powerful
uences for good instead of embitt-
ed, frustrated subjects, constantly
barking upon enterprises that were
eess causes and insurrectionary
ures." The documents on which
Hill-Reid founds his story were
ntly discovered in the vaults of a
ndon bank. They have been finely
d.

LIGHT IN LIVING THINGS

Brown Hayes is no more than a
me incidentally mentioned by Mr.
bings in a book that has the over-
wing love of life that wells up from
that this author writes and so
endidly illustrates with wood en-
vings. He quotes Llewellyn Powys:
to be alive is the prize above all
izes," and every book that has come
m him seems an illustration of this
eme. He delights in all living things,
d, beyond most, in water, as the
les of his books suggest. "Some-
en," he writes, "crave islands, some
ave mountain tops: it is water that
lls to me. Fresh or salt, tranquil or
a pool or thunderous on a shore,
pping at bent grasses or leaping
om a prow, the insistence is the same.
ychologists may know the reason—
am content with the appetite."

That, too, is characteristic of him.
ever was there a writer who less asked
ay, who more fully accepted experi-
nce for its own sake. "Contented if
e may enjoy the things that others
understand," says Wordsworth; and
at is how it is with Mr. Gibbings.
ere he is in this book, settled in a
ottage on a Thames backwater, with
othing at all to write about but things
at others might consider insignifi-
cant. But how richly significant he
akes them: a barefoot stroll through
he dew to the boat; an evening's
llification with the local fishermen;
even the look of a piece of wood with
he tree's long story written in the
rain. "Every tree-trunk a casket,"
nd with what a loving hand he uses
ood to illustrate the writing! You
an look at these pictures down to the
ast eighth of an inch and marvel that
ccuracy could be so enchanting. Oil
aint is a wonderful disguise for an
artist's poverty; but you can't get
away with that on wood. And so, for
his book, as for so many others, a
hank you to skill of hand and over-
owing bounty of heart.

HAPPY HOME OF PRIME
MINISTERS

No. 10 Downing Street, 1660-1900,
y Hector Bolitho (Hutchinson, 25s.),
tells the story of the famous house
om the time of its building by Sir
George Downing in 1660 up to the end
of the last century. But when one says
the story of the house, there isn't much
o be said about the house, after all,
eyond the fact that Downing built
adly, so that the fabric has always
aused anxiety, and that the simple
açade is deceptive, for behind it there
as been addition after addition. It is
he story of the men who occupied the
ouse and of the times they endured
r moulded, which is to say it is a brief
on through a space of English history.
r. Bolitho tells us frankly that it is

the men, not the house, that is his
theme: "the men, and their families
... I have tried to describe the long
procession, through two and a half
centuries, with enough history to show
them against the background of their
times." He is struck by the fact that
so many of them died of hard work
and that "most of them were men of
remarkable integrity and respecta-
bility. ... The abiding impression is of
happy family life and virtue—even in
the eighteenth century, when virtue
was out of fashion."

HORROR OF LIFE IN A
SUBMARINE

I have rarely read a more brutal
novel than *Sharks and Little Fish*,
translated by Oliver Coburn from the
German of Wolfgang Ott (Hutchinson,
15s.). It is the story of how a number
of young men went through the last
war, first in minesweepers and then in
a submarine. It doesn't need much
imagination to realise that life in a sub-
marine, even in peacetime, is un-
pleasant and contrary to the normal
instincts of a man; and that, in war-
time, it is hell. That, I should say, is
all that Wolfgang Ott, in a mood of
disgust and despair, wanted to tell us.
There are shore episodes when the
men, in violent revulsion, go for drink
and women, but it is the detailed
account of the horror of below-seas
warfare that the author has wanted to
bring home.

I don't like supping on horrors;
I can imagine them well enough; and,
after a while, I should not have con-
tinued reading the book had it not
been my task to do so. I advise the
squeamish to abstain, even while
recognising that it is written under the
authentic compulsion of an artist.
Mr. Ott clearly could do no other; but
what a comment on the insanity and
bestiality of men!

STONE AGE TO ATOM
BOMB

A GRAPHIC picture of man's use
and abuse of the natural sources
of power in the world about him is
given in Lancelot Hogben's *Men,
Missiles and Machines* (Rathbone
Books, 17s. 6d.). This book gives its
information largely in pictorial form,
with artists' reconstructions of Stone
Age man hauling logs, Galvani study-
ing spasmodic movements in frogs'
legs, and the desert in New Mexico
turned to glass by the heat of an
atomic explosion. Mr. Hogben's text
deals simply and lucidly with man's
advances from brute muscle to the
refinements of atomic energy and
solar reflectors.

BIBLE PICTURES

A WELL-PRODUCED book with
fine coloured reproductions is
*The Life of Christ in Masterpieces of
Art* (Max Parrish, 55s.). The pictures
range from a 15th-century Spanish
relief of the *Flight into Egypt* to
Rembrandt's *Descent from the Cross*,
and each is accompanied by the
appropriate Scriptural text. *Great
Bible Pictures*, selected by Margaret
H. Bulley (Batsford, 25s.), contains
over 60 black-and-white illustrations
of scenes from the Old and New
Testaments, including such master-
pieces as Michelangelo's *Jeremiah* and
William Blake's *The Angel of the
Revelation*. Each picture is accom-
panied by a Biblical quotation.

The new *Pears Cyclopadia* (Pears,
Isleworth, Middlesex, 15s.) contains,
in addition to a gazetteer, general in-
formation section and medical dictio-
nary, a section on modern discoveries
in science, including radio telescopes
and subconscious perception.



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A double-breasted jacket in cheetah, beautifully marked and matched, is as soft as silk (S. London).
The hat is by Simone Mirman

(Left) A close cap of stitched mushroom brown velvet has a brim of shaded feathers in the same tone (Kate Day)



FURS in recent displays have been sumptuous as well as practical and the latest silhouettes have been interpreted with skill and imagination. The over-riding impression is of the lightness and flexibility of the pelts, due to the modern methods of processing. Mink and broadtail fall like velvet and are obviously as soft and supple. Musquash, treated, stranded and dyed to resemble the more expensive pelts, is a great success in the paler blends of brown that are so fashionable.

Waist-length boleros with pouched backs are

introduced for the slender sheaths of evening dresses. Wide stole ends in front cross over and just cover the waistline. The longer mink stoles are also often stranded across from side to side at the back so that they take the shape of a cape and are worked in sections over the shoulders so that the stole stays in place.

The long coats, tailored like cloth, feature the main silhouettes, though lengths vary from seven-eighths or nine-tenths to that of the coat that covers the day dress completely. The straight coats, varied by a line that tapers to the hemline, are shaped with slight gores in the back; there are small collars on the straight coats, and shawl collars on the tapered ones. The big collars are stranded so that they can either fold back in deep points across the shoulders or wrap round the throat. Newest of all the coats in this style are the beavers, minks and nutrias that are bleached and dyed in a pale



(Left) Black broadtail, as supple as velvet, is tailored like cloth, with smooth fronts and gores in the back. White mink bands the three-quarter sleeves, which have a second pointed cuff of the broadtail (Bradleys).

(Right) A coat of flecked tweed in ginger and black features the tapered hemline and a bulky treatment of the shoulders. The collar is of seal musquash (Worth)

Photographs by
COUNTRY LIFE Studio

blond or tortoiseshell brown. Wild mink, perfectly matched, made a superlative near-long coat in the National Fur Company's collection. A three-quarter-length mink looked equally effective. Big plain sleeves could be turned back almost to the elbow or be worn down to the wrists.

The second group of fur coats look more casual with half belts placed well below the waistlines at the back and flapped pockets as low in front. Here a double-breasted fastening is smartest, as are plain narrow collar and revers or a collar that can fold down to a low opening reminiscent of the styles of the 'twenties. Furs chosen for these coats have been Persian lamb, either black, brown or smoke-grey, broad-tail, beaver, nutria and ocelot.

JACKETS of sealskin, Persian lamb, nutria, ocelot, beaver and musquash are tailored into reefer shapes or double-breasted with narrow revers, or are made from two furs, as Debenham and Freebody shows them when they wrap across in front and have a wide collar. A Lanvin design in Persian lamb takes a collar of black sealskin with a long opening and two furs combined for several other designs; a white mink double cape is banded with black mink on the upper layer and a full-length black sealskin coat is given an ocelot collar as well as flaring ocelot cuffs on bracelet-length sleeves. The wide working of the skins on a caped stole of wild mink has proved most effective. This stole pouches slightly at the back and the collar repeats the movement. In front it is broad enough to wrap well across and long enough to cover the waist, with a few inches to spare.

Woollands' collection of Paris and Italian *couture* models displayed all the latest fashion sensations, some being in the ready-to-wear departments, others original models from the boutique. Here was the latest in sack dresses from Balenciaga, a brief black affair that barely covered the knees and tapered to the hem slightly so that the model could barely walk. It was shown with exciting accessories, long chains of pearls and jewels dangling almost to the waist and a cap of coarse chenille-

(Below) A cap of stitched velvet folding over to one side (Scotts)



dotted black net that came down as a visor. Another Balenciaga dress in Ascher's tangerine mohair and nylon fabric was dead straight with a stitched band circling the skirt above the deep hem and a mauve velvet bow on one side of the band. This showed the high-cut oval neckline that is the favourite for these dresses. Dior's scarlet "shift" dress in pure wool jersey, bloused slightly at the waist and given bracelet-length sleeves and a V neckline, made fewer demands on the figure and is likely to be widely copied.

All the day dresses were noticeably shorter, with softly bloused bodices above midriffs and waists that were indicated by darts. When they hung untrammelled from the shoulders to the hem, in most instances the line was broken by a draped back with smooth front or by seams that curved into arc shapes from each armhole in front converging on the centre. The object is to create a soft unfitted look, while at the same side indicating the figure subtly. For this an intricate cut is vital and the fabric must be interesting. Hence the resounding success of Ascher's light mohair fabric with its broken bouclé or long-haired surface, extremely flexible texture and the glorious vivid colours in the range.



The back-to-the-'twenties' look appeared in the Woollands collection as a blond wool jumper suit banded with grosgrain. Other day dresses were moulded in front by breast-plate effects or lyre-shape bodices. Coats covering them curved gently into cocoon shape between narrow shoulders and hems,

hung straight as sacks, or had inverted pleats set in about a foot above the hemlines. Shoulders and armholes fitted easily and narrow collar circled the throat or just fell away.

A series of short slender black crêpe dresses of the utmost simplicity appeared for cocktails. They were worn with exotic jewellery and feathered hats or fluffy tulle ball-shaped confections. Short satin evening dresses of olive green, amber, cerise, or Italian blue were pleated in front so that the pleats converged above the waist with fullness released each side over the natural waistline and hips and reduced again to a narrow hemline. The backs were plain and moulded and necklines were cut out to a modest scoop in front and a wedge at the back, or were elliptical.

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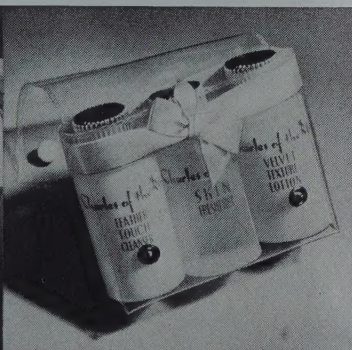
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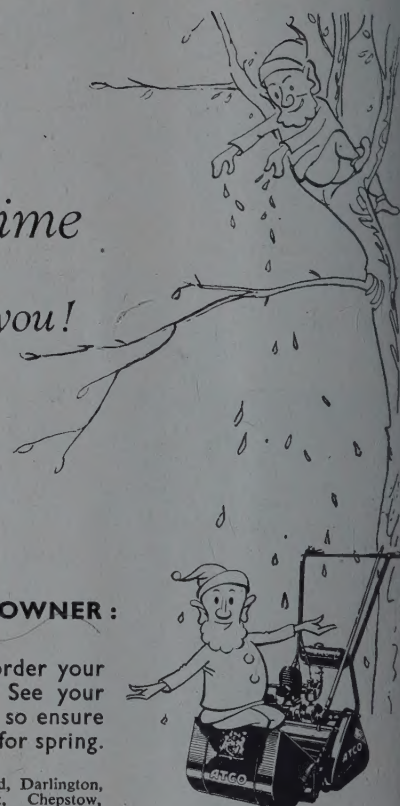
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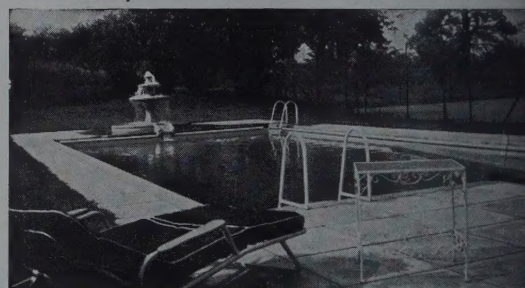
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